Version 2.0 – 2021.06.09

Program Information Platform for Ecosystem Restoration (PIPER) FPL and SEP Application System User Manual

GULF COAST ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION COUNCIL

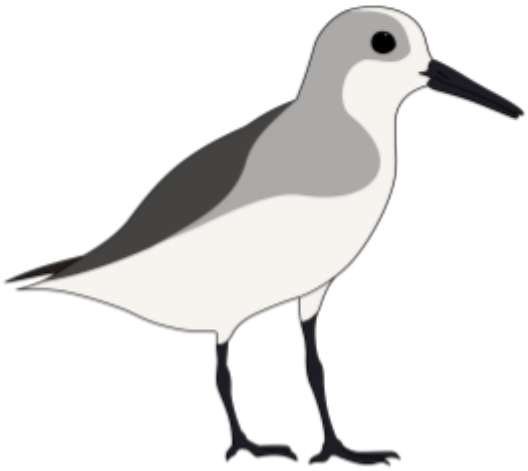


Table of Contents

Creating an Application **3**

General Information 4

FPL Application General Information Tab 4

SEP Application General Information Tab 8

Goals Information 12

Location Information 14

Project Narrative Information 15

Introduction 15

Methods 16

Environmental Benefits 17

Metrics 18

Risk 21

Collaboration/Public Engagement 22

Leveraging 23

Environmental Compliance 25

Federally-Recognized Tribes 27

Bibliography 28

Milestones 29

Environmental Compliance Documentation 33

Uploads 35

Submission 38

Program Applications with Project-Specific Workplans **40**

General Information Tab 40

Goals Tab 42

Project Narrative Tab 43

Introduction and Overview 43

Methods 43

Environmental Benefits 44

Metrics 44
Risk 46
Collaboration/Public Engagement 47
Leveraging 47
Environmental Compliance 47
Federally-Recognized Tribes 47
Bibliography 48
Milestones 48
Environmental Compliance Documentation 49
Uploads 50
Project-Specific Workplan Upload Guidance 51
Viewing Applications **53**
Resubmitting an Application in PIPER **54**
Appendix A: Environmental Compliance Checklist **55**

Creating an Application

Step 1: Select the Applications tab at the top of the webpage. This will present you with two options: "View Applications" and "Create Application." Select "Create Application" to begin.

Step 2: You will then be asked if the application is for a Funded Priorities List (FPL) or a State Expenditure PLan (SEP) funded project/program. Select the appropriate option and press Save.

Step 3: If this is an FPL application you will be presented with the option to select an existing proposal. Select the approved FPL proposal you are advancing as an application and then select "Add to Application." If this is an SEP application you will be asked to enter a title for your project/program. Enter the title and then hit save.

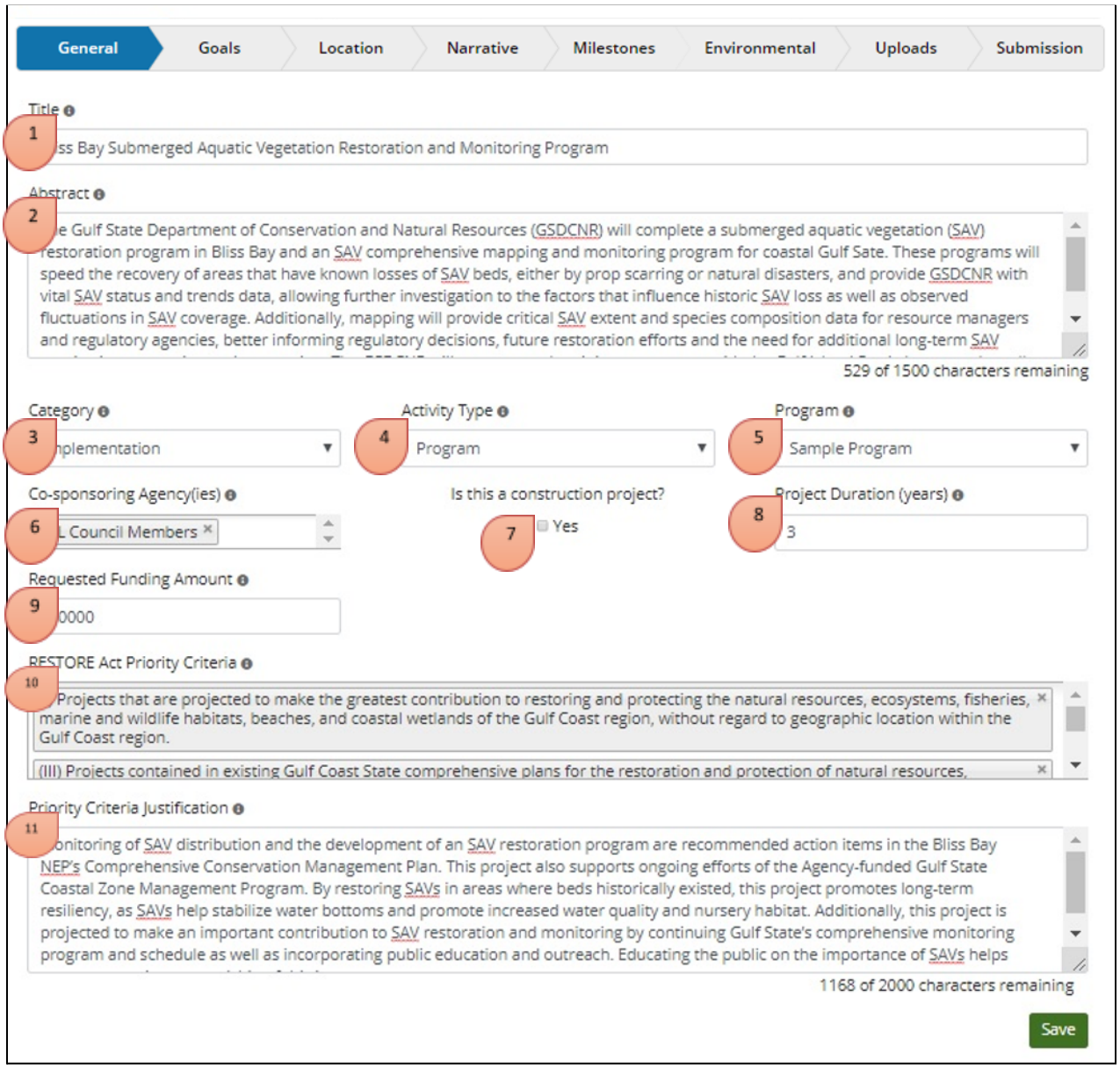
In either case, you will then be brought to the Application Editor, which includes a series of tabs, all of which will be explained in further detail in designated sections of this user manual. If this is an FPL application these tabs will be prepopulated with information submitted in your selected proposal. You may save your progress by clicking the green save button at the bottom of **each** page to enable you to return to your application if need be. You can **return to an incomplete application** by selecting "View Applications" under the Applications tab on the top of the webpage. Select the pencil icon next to the application you want to edit, allowing you to resume application creation.

For additional instructions on populating data fields for an FPL application please proceed to the FPL General Application Instructions. For instructions on populating an SEP application, please proceed to the SEP General Application Instructions.

For specific guidance on submitting an application for a Program that will have project-specific workplans please review the FPL and SEP information below, *and* see the Program Applications with Project-Specific Workplans portion of this guidance document.

General Information

FPL Application General Information Tab



1. Title: ** Create a title for your application using 100 characters or less (including spaces).

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

2. Abstract: ** In 1500 characters or less, summarize the application project or program[1], including the following information:

-activity name

description of activity, including the purpose and goal of the activity

-anticipated environmental benefits

-location

-total cost (and amount of Council funding being requested, if different than the total cost)

-timeline

-partners

-other information that might be needed to provide the reader with an overview of the activity

This section should be written for the general public. The language provided here may be used verbatim for fact sheets or other public facing documents.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

The following example abstract may be used as a reference:

Example Abstract

The State of Bliss, through the Bliss Department of Natural Resources (BDNR), is requesting $11 million in Council-Selected Restoration Component funding for the Council-Approved Bliss Bay SAV Restoration and Monitoring Project (BBSRMP). The project will include planning and implementation activities to complete a submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) restoration program in Bliss Bay, Upper Serene Bay, and Happy River Delta as well as a comprehensive SAV mapping and monitoring program for coastal Bliss state. Developing strategies to address SAV loss in Bliss Bay will achieve the goal of restoring and conserving habitat. SAV habitat provides numerous ecological functions, but is also vulnerable to stressors such as coastal development and water quality degradation.

BBSRMP activities will result in significant environmental benefits to Bliss's natural resources and ecosystems by speeding the recovery of areas that have known losses of SAV beds due to prop scarring or natural disasters. This project will provide BDNR with vital SAV status and trends data to allow further investigation to the factors that influence historic SAV loss as well as observed fluctuations in SAV coverage. Additionally,

[1] For specific guidance on submitting an application for a Program that will have project-specific workplans please review the FPL and SEP information below, and see the Program Applications with Project-Specific Workplans portion of this guidance document.

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mapping will provide critical SAV extent and species composition data for resource managers and regulatory agencies, better informing regulatory decisions, future restoration efforts, and the need for additional long-term SAV monitoring. Program duration is 7 years.

3. Category:** Indicate which category your application falls in. The Council will consider applications from members that address planning or implementation phases, or both, of projects or programs.

Examples of which activities are conducted in the Planning and Implementation phases are:

Planning – FPL submissions may include: planning and development of ecosystem restoration projects and programs; cost estimates; feasibility analysis; engineering and design; environmental compliance and permitting; scientific elements, including evaluation and establishment of monitoring requirements and methods to report outcomes and impacts; and public engagement. **Note**: If "Planning" is selected as the application category the Environmental tab in PIPER will be "locked.

Implementation – FPL submissions may include: construction; public outreach and education; and measurement, evaluation, and reporting of outcomes and impacts of restoration activities.

4. Activity Type:** Indicate whether the application is for an individual project or for a multi-activity program by selecting "Project" or "Program" from the drop down menu.

Project: A single ecosystem restoration and/or conservation activity that cannot be separated into stand-alone sub-activities. A project may be "scalable," meaning that its scope, size, and/or cost can be expanded or reduced as needed and appropriate. A project can be separated into a "planning" or "implementation" phase or can include both. One or more members can conduct a project. For example, a single project might restore marsh in a specific geographic location. Another example of a project might be the planning, engineering, and design required to advance a marsh restoration proposal to a construction-ready status.

Program: A suite of intrinsically-linked restoration and/or conservation activities that must be implemented together in order to achieve the desired outcome. A program should generally be covered by one unified Council environmental compliance review and have a common set of performance measures to effectively assess and measure outcomes. A program's sub-activities may be related in terms of geography, environmental stressors, resources, restoration and/or protection activities, and more. A program can be separated into a "planning" or "implementation" phase or can include both. One or more members can conduct a program. For example, a single program might be a Gulfwide environmental monitoring effort.

5. Program:** If the activity type selected is "program", select the appropriate pre-populated FPL program from the drop-down list. If the activity type selected is "project", skip this field. **Note:** If the appropriate program does not appear in the drop-down list, please contact the RESTORE Helpdesk.

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

6. Co-Sponsoring Agencies:** Select all co-sponsoring agencies for this application. If there are none, this field may be left blank.

7. Check the box** if the application is a construction project.

8. Project Duration (in years):** Enter requested duration of the project/program award (i.e., number of years to complete the project/program). In your request, include time required for appropriate permitting, pre-construction and post-construction monitoring (if applicable).

9. Requested Funding:** Enter the amount of funding you are requesting for your project/program. Please align this amount with the funding amount requested for this application in GrantSolutions.

10. RESTORE Act Priority Criteria:** Activities must meet at least one of the four RESTORE Act Priority Criteria (listed below). For each criteria selected you will need to provide a justification for your selection in the following field.**

11. Priority Criteria Justification:** Provide justification for how the activity meets the RESTORE Act Priority Criteria selected in the previous field, using a maximum of 2000 characters, including spaces.**

The Priority Criteria and the ways in which they should be addressed are listed below:

> (I) Greatest Contribution: Projects that are projected to make the greatest contribution to restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region, without regard to geographic location within the Gulf Coast region. If the activity is designed to address Criterion I: greatest contribution to restoring and protecting natural resources in the Gulf, the application should include a discussion of relevant factors (e.g., scale, duration, and sustainability).
>
> (II) Large-Scale: Large-scale projects and programs that are projected to substantially contribute to restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast ecosystem. If an activity is designed to address Criterion II: large-scale projects and programs, the application should include an explanation of how the activity would provide large-scale environmental benefits within the appropriate Gulf-wide, regional, or watershed context, or in the context of the expected benefits of the project or program relative to the restoration needs in the given coastal area.
>
> (III) Existing Gulf Coast State comprehensive plans: Projects contained in existing Gulf Coast State comprehensive plans for the restoration and protection of natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region. If an activity is designed primarily to address Criterion III, the application should reference the existing Gulf Coast State comprehensive plan containing the activity.
>
> (IV) Restore long-term resiliency of most impacted natural resources: Projects that restore long-term resiliency of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands most impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. If an activity is designed to primarily address Criterion IV: restore long-term resiliency of natural resources most

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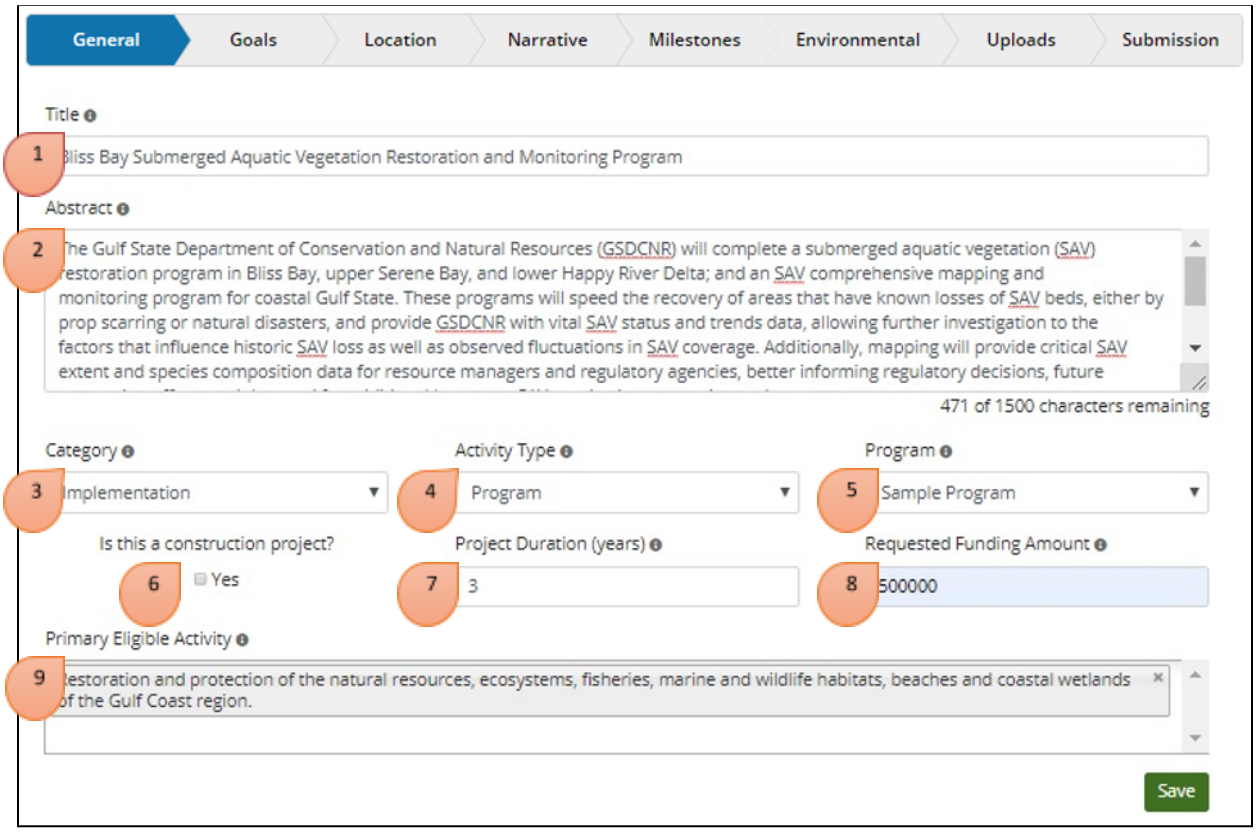
impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the application should include a discussion of relevant factors (e.g., duration, sustainability, and how the proposal would improve an area's capacity to adapt to short- and long-term changes). The application should also discuss how the project or program addresses natural resources most impacted by the spill.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue.**

If a required field is left empty, or if a field is occupied incorrectly, a red text will appear under the problem fields after clicking the green save button at the bottom of the page

Once you complete and save the General tab, you can navigate to any of the other tabs in the order that you wish.

SEP Application General Information Tab



1. Title: Create a title for your application using 100 characters or less (including spaces).

2. Project Abstract: In 1500 characters or less, summarize the application project or program, including the following information:

-activity name

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

-description of activity, including the purpose and goal of the activity

-anticipated environmental benefits

-location

-total cost (and amount of Council funding being requested, if different than the total cost)

-timeline

-partners

-other information that might be needed to provide the reader with an overview of the activity

This section should be written for the general public. The language provided here may be used verbatim for fact sheets or other public facing documents.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing. The following example abstract may be used as a reference:

Example Abstract

The State of Bliss, through the Bliss Department of Natural Resources (BDNR), is requesting $11 million in Spill Impact Component funding for the Bliss Bay SAV Restoration and Monitoring Project (BBSRMP). The program will include planning and implementation activities to complete a submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) restoration project in Bliss Bay, Upper Serene Bay, and Happy River Delta as well as a comprehensive SAV mapping and monitoring program for coastal Bliss state. Developing strategies to address SAV loss in Bliss Bay will achieve the goal of restoring and conserving habitat. SAV habitat provides numerous ecological functions, but is also vulnerable to stressors such as coastal development and water quality degradation.

BBSRMP activities will result in significant environmental benefits to Bliss's natural resources and ecosystems by speeding the recovery of areas that have known losses of SAV beds due to prop scarring or natural disasters. This project will provide BDNR with vital SAV status and trends data to allow further investigation to the factors that influence historic SAV loss as well as observed fluctuations in SAV coverage. Additionally, mapping will provide critical SAV extent and species composition data for resource managers and regulatory agencies, better informing regulatory decisions, future restoration efforts, and the need for additional long-term SAV monitoring. Program duration is 7 years.

3. Category: Indicate which category your application falls in. The Council will consider applications from members that address planning or implementation phases, or both, of projects or programs. **Note:** If "Planning" is selected as the application category the Environmental tab in PIPER will be "locked.

Examples of which activities are conducted in the Planning and Implementation phases are:

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

Planning – Planning activities may include: planning and development of ecosystem restoration projects and programs; cost estimates; feasibility analysis; engineering and design; environmental compliance and permitting; scientific elements, including evaluation and establishment of monitoring requirements and methods to report outcomes and impacts; and public engagement.

Implementation – Implementation activities may include: construction; public outreach and education; and measurement, evaluation, and reporting of outcomes and impacts of restoration activities.

4. Activity Type: Indicate whether the application is for an individual project or for a multi-activity program by selecting "Project" or "Program" from the drop down menu.

Project: A single ecosystem restoration and/or conservation activity that cannot be separated into stand-alone sub-activities. A project may be "scalable," meaning that its scope, size, and/or cost can be expanded or reduced as needed and appropriate. A project can be separated into a "planning" or "implementation" phase or can include both. One or more members can conduct a project. For example, a single project might restore marsh in a specific geographic location. Another example of a project might be the planning, engineering, and design required to advance a marsh restoration proposal to a construction-ready status.

Program: A suite of intrinsically-linked restoration and/or conservation activities that must be implemented together in order to achieve the desired outcome. A program should generally be covered by one unified Council environmental compliance review and have a common set of performance measures to effectively assess and measure outcomes. A program's sub-activities may be related in terms of geography, environmental stressors, resources, restoration and/or protection activities, and more. A program can be separated into a "planning" or "implementation" phase or can include both. One or more members can conduct a program. For example, a single program might be a Gulfwide environmental monitoring effort

5. Program: If the activity type selected is "program", select the appropriate pre-populated program from the drop-down list. If the activity type selected is "project", skip this field. **Note:** If the appropriate program does not appear in the drop-down list, please contact the PIPER helpdesk.

6. Check the box if the application is a construction project.

7. Project Duration (in years): Enter requested duration of the project/program award (i.e., number of years to complete the project/program). In your estimate, include time required for appropriate permitting, pre-construction and post-construction monitoring (if applicable).

8. Requested Funding Amount: Enter the amount of funding you are requesting for your project/program. **Note:** This amount should align with the funding request in GrantSolutions.

9. Primary Eligible Activity: The RESTORE Act contains eleven categories of activities eligible for funding. For each project or program in a SEP, the State must identify one of the below eleven eligible activities as the primary purpose of the project or program. Please reference the 2016 State Expenditure Plan Guidelines for additional information.

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1. Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.
2. Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, and natural resources.
3. Implementation of a federally-approved marine, coastal, or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring.
4. Workforce development and job creation.
5. Improvements to or on State parks located in coastal areas affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
6. Infrastructure projects benefiting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure.
7. Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure.
8. Planning assistance.
9. Administrative costs of complying with the Act.
10. Promotion of tourism in the Gulf Coast region, including recreational fishing.
11. Promotion of the consumption of seafood harvested from the Gulf Coast region.

Note: The primary eligible activity identified in your application must match the activity identified in your approved State Expenditure Plan.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue.**

If a required field is left empty, or if a field is occupied incorrectly, a red text will appear under the problem fields after clicking the green save button at the bottom of the page

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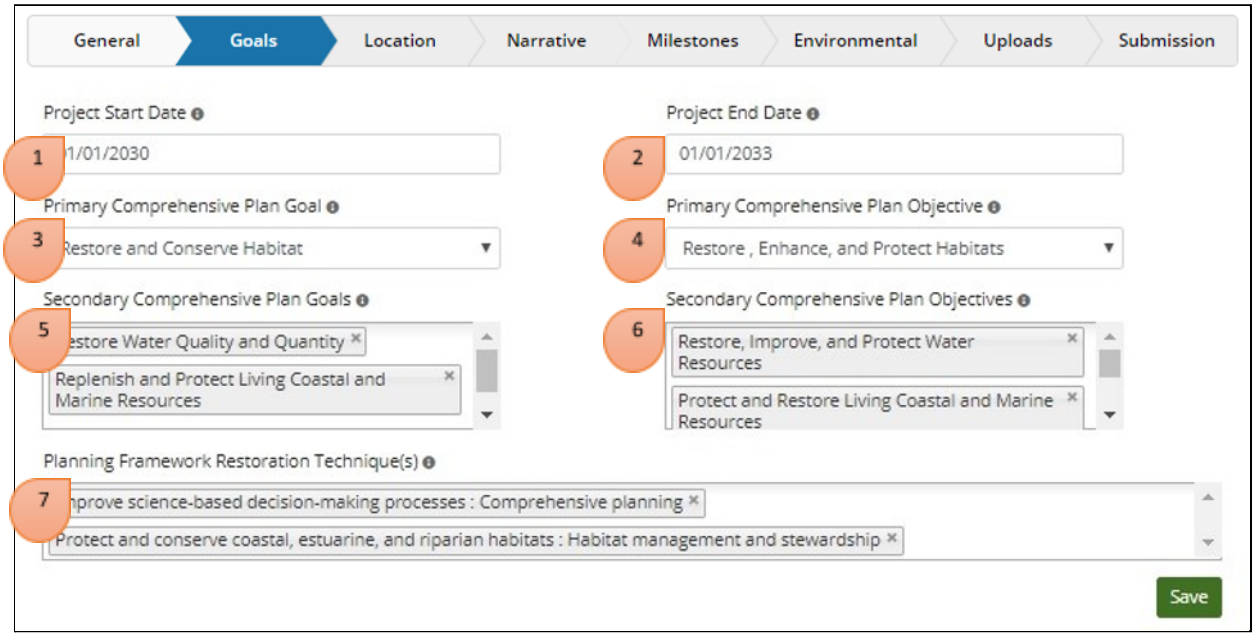
Goals Information



Your Comprehensive Plan Goals indicate which RESTORE Council goals you intend to address through your activity. Your Comprehensive Plan Objectives are more specific actions that will lead to the achievement of the overall goal. The data fields populated on this tab are the same for both FPL and SEP applications.

1&2. Date: Select the anticipated start and end dates for your project/program.

3&4. Primary:** Select one primary goal and one primary objective for your application. Use the drop-down menus to select the **Primary Comprehensive Plan Goal** and the **Primary Comprehensive Plan Objective** that best describes your application.

The Comprehensive Plan Goals are listed below. The first four are applicable to the Council Selected Restoration Component (the fifth goal is applicable to the Spill Impact Component). Applications must identify which goal(s) the activity will address. An application sponsor must select a single primary goal. One or more secondary goals may be identified, but this is not required. Metrics and quantifiable measures of success will need to be identified for each Comprehensive Plan goal associated with your project or program (including any secondary goals).

> Goal 1: Restore and Conserve Habitat - Restore and conserve the health, diversity, and resilience of key coastal, estuarine and marine habitats;
>
> Goal 2: Restore Water Quality and Quantity - Restore and protect the water quality and quantity of the Gulf Coast region's fresh, estuarine and marine waters;
>
> Goal 3: Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources - Restore and protect healthy, diverse, and sustainable living coastal and marine resources;

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

Goal 4: Enhance Community Resilience - Build upon and sustain communities with capacity to adapt to short- and long-term changes; and

Goal 5: Restore and Revitalize the Gulf Economy - Enhance the sustainability and resiliency of the Gulf economy.

The Comprehensive Plan Objectives are listed below. An application sponsor must select a single primary objective. One or more secondary objectives may be identified, but this is not required.

Objective 1: Restore, Enhance and Protect Habitats - Restore, enhance, and protect the extent, functionality, resiliency and sustainability of coastal, freshwater, estuarine, wildlife and marine habitats. These include barrier islands, beaches, dunes, coastal wetlands, coastal forests, pine savannas, coastal prairies, submerged aquatic vegetation, oyster reefs, and shallow and deepwater corals.

Objective 2: Restore, Improve and Protect Water Resources - Restore, improve and protect the Gulf Coast region's fresh, estuarine and marine water resources by reducing or treating nutrient and pollutant loading, and improving the management of freshwater flows, discharges to, and withdrawals from critical systems.

Objective 3: Protect and Restore Living Coastal and Marine Resources - Restore and protect healthy, diverse and sustainable living coastal and marine resources including finfish, shellfish, birds, mammals, reptiles, coral and deep benthic communities.

Objective 4: Restore and Enhance Natural Processes and Shorelines - Restore and enhance ecosystem resilience, sustainability, and natural defenses through the restoration of natural coastal, estuarine and riverine processes, and/or the restoration of natural shorelines.

Objective 5: Promote Community Resilience - Build and sustain Gulf Coast communities' capacity to adapt to short- and long-term natural and man-made hazards, particularly increased flood risks associated with sea-level rise and environmental stressors. Promote ecosystem restoration that enhances community resilience through the re-establishment of nonstructural natural buffers against storms and flooding.

Objective 6: Promote Natural Resource Stewardship and Environmental Education - Promote and enhance natural resource stewardship efforts that include formal and informal educational opportunities, professional development and training, communication and other actions for all ages.

Objective 7: Improve Science-Based Decision-Making Processes - Improve science based decision-making processes used by the Council.

5&6. Secondary:** If there are additional goals and objectives applicable to your application, use the fields titled "**Secondary Comprehensive Plan Goals**" and "**Secondary Comprehensive Plan Objectives**" to add any secondary goals and objectives your activity will address. Using the drop-down menus, you

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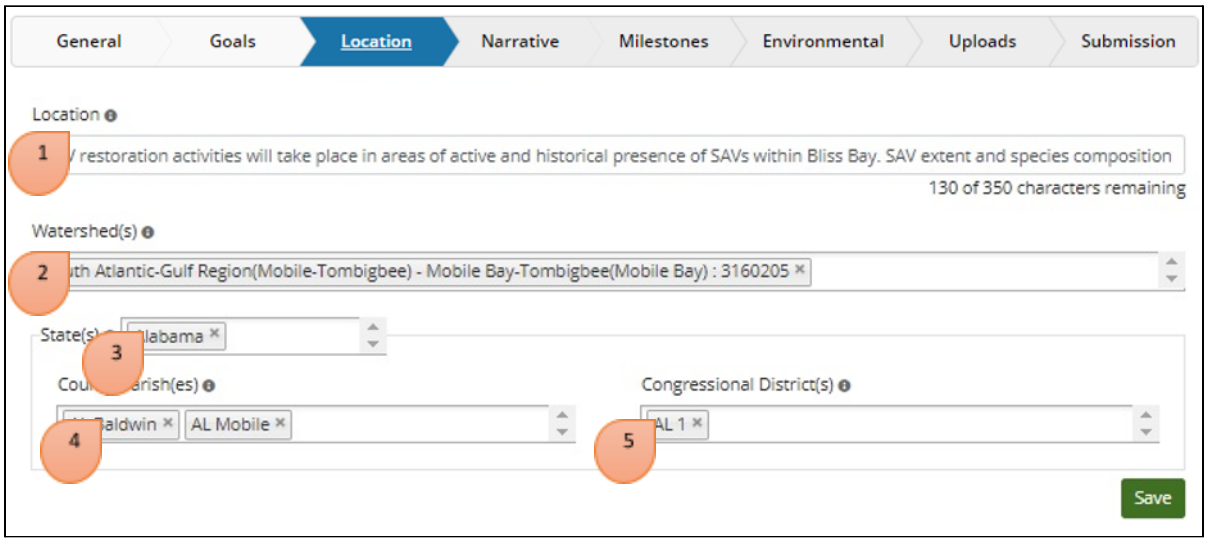
can add multiple secondary goals and objectives. If your activity does not address additional goals or objectives, skip these fields.

Note: Metrics and quantifiable targets will need to be identified for each Comprehensive Plan goal and objective associated with a project or program. This includes primary and secondary goals/objectives.

7. Planning Framework Restoration Technique(s):** Use the drop-down menu to select the appropriate Planning Framework technique(s) for your activity. Multiple techniques may be selected. Please reference the Additional Metric Guidance for more information, and see the 2019 Planning Framework for descriptions of Council restoration techniques.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue**.

Location Information



1. Location:** Describe the location for the activity in 350 characters or less.

2. HUC8 Watershed(s):** Use the drop-down menu to select all HUC8 Watersheds your activity involves.

3. State(s):** Use the drop-down menu to select the state(s) in which your activity will take place.

4. County/Parish(es):** Use the drop-down menu to select the county/parish(es) in which your activity will take place.

5. Congressional District(s):** Use the drop-down menu to select the congressional district(s) in which your activity will take place.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue**.

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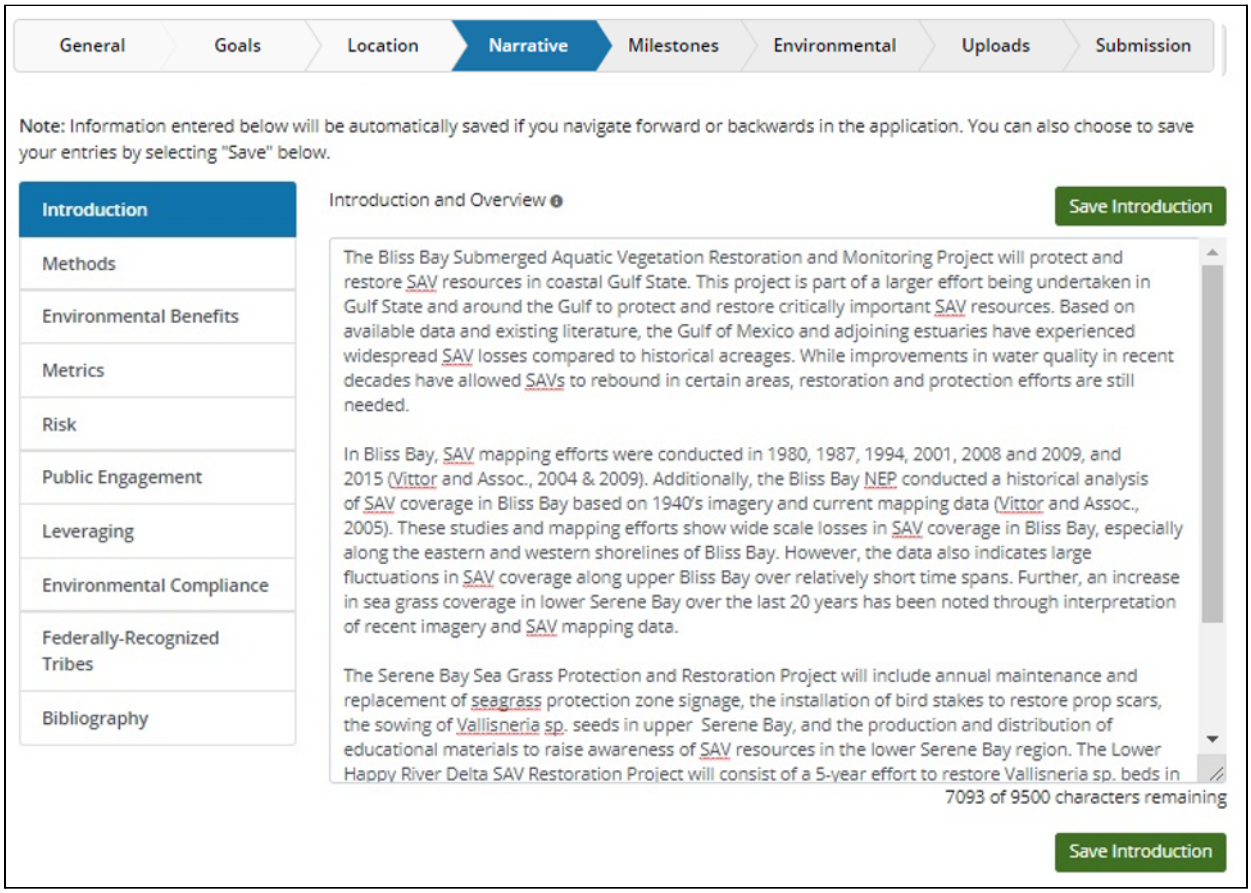
Project Narrative Information

Note: Information entered below will be automatically saved if you navigate upward or downward in this tab. You can also choose to save your entries by selecting either of the green save buttons on the top right and bottom right of each page.

Introduction



Introduction and Overview:** Fully describe the project or program (in 9500 characters or less), including the following information: description of the activity including whether it involves planning and/or implementation, anticipated environmental benefits, environmental stressor(s) being addressed, location, total cost (and amount of Council funding being applied for, if different than total cost), timeline, partners, and other information that might be needed to provide the reader with a full understanding of the activity. This section may briefly discuss and/or reference the specific considerations that will be discussed in other sections of the application.

Describe how the activity:

- Will be carried out in the Gulf Coast Region,
- Addresses one or more of the Council's Goals and Objectives, and

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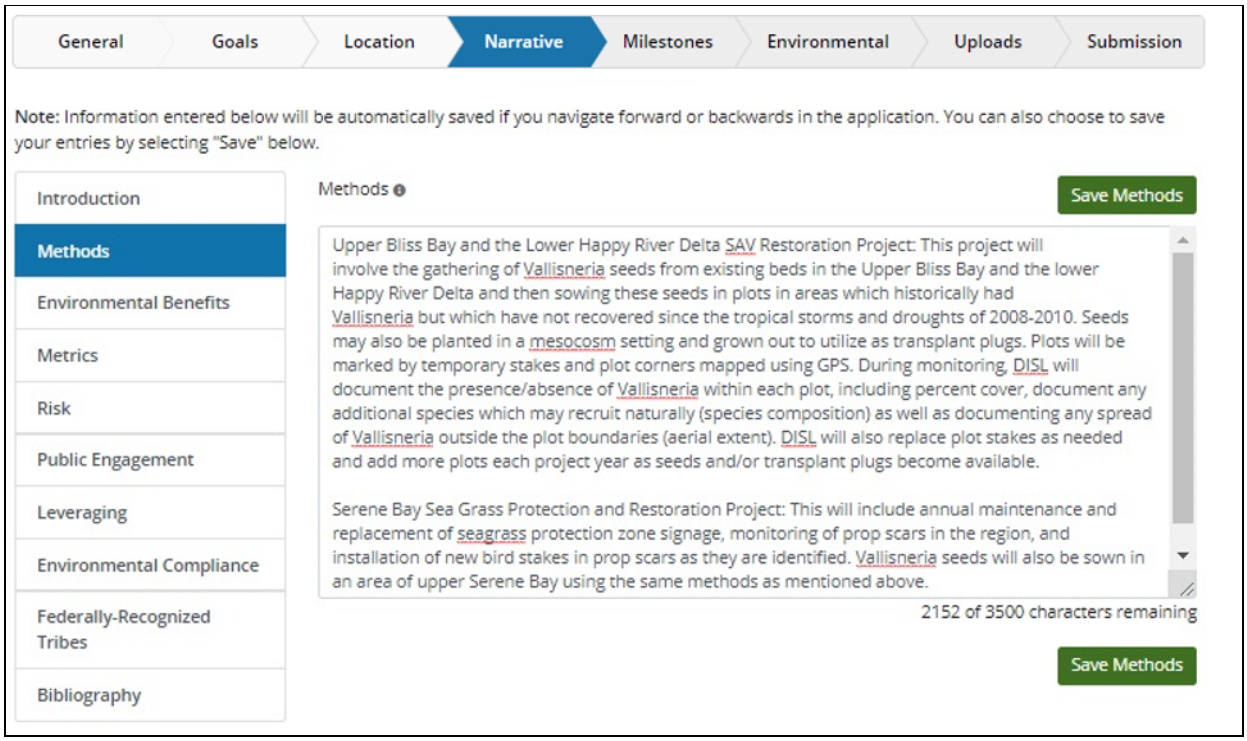
- Advances the commitments set forth in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

The primary Comprehensive Plan goal and objective must be identified. If you are applying for FPL funding describe how the activity aligns with the FPL 3 Planning Framework.

A primary purpose of this section is to make a clear case for how the project or program meets the applicable Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and objective(s).

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Methods



Methods:** Describe the methods to be used in the project or program, and the reasons that these methods were selected. All methods should be justified using best available science (provide citations); methods may also be justified by other reasons (e.g., cost-effectiveness, technical feasibility). For example, a marsh restoration project might utilize a particular source or type of sediment based on engineering, ecological, and/or cost-effectiveness issues. Activities that do not involve construction might also involve a particular method. For example, a planning project might use information generated by a specific forecasting model and/or field data collection to inform engineering and design plans. Such methodologies should be described.

The character limit is 9500, including spaces.

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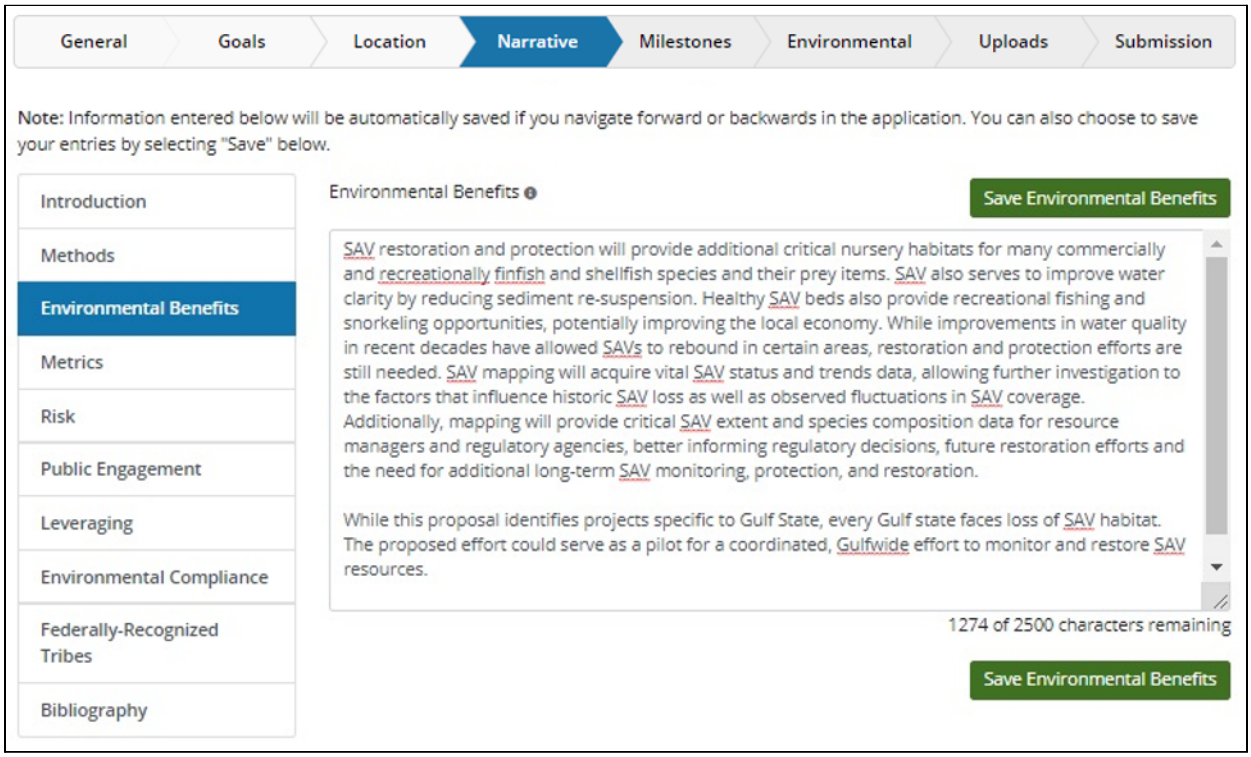
Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Environmental Benefits



Environmental benefits:** In addition to the discussion of anticipated environmental benefits in the Introduction and Overview section, provide a detailed description of anticipated environmental benefits (in 5000 characters or less). Environmental benefits can be achieved through multiple activities that could be considered for funding (e.g., planning, implementation, science, education, improved resilience). Such benefits can be quantitative (e.g., acres restored or conserved, amount of nutrients or other pollutant reductions) and/or qualitative (e.g., increased community resilience, increased public stewardship of natural resources). Such benefits must be discussed in reference to one or more underlying environmental stressors identified by best available science and/or an applicable ecosystem restoration plan(s). Some applications such as those involving natural resource stewardship and improving science-based decision-making may not specifically address an underlying environmental stressor. Discuss the rationale for the anticipated duration/sustainability of the environmental benefits that would accrue from the activity (consistent with the following discussion of risks and uncertainties). If the activity involves only planning, engineering and design, and/or permitting (i.e., no construction), this section should make it clear that the actual environmental benefits would only accrue if implementation funding is secured in the future.

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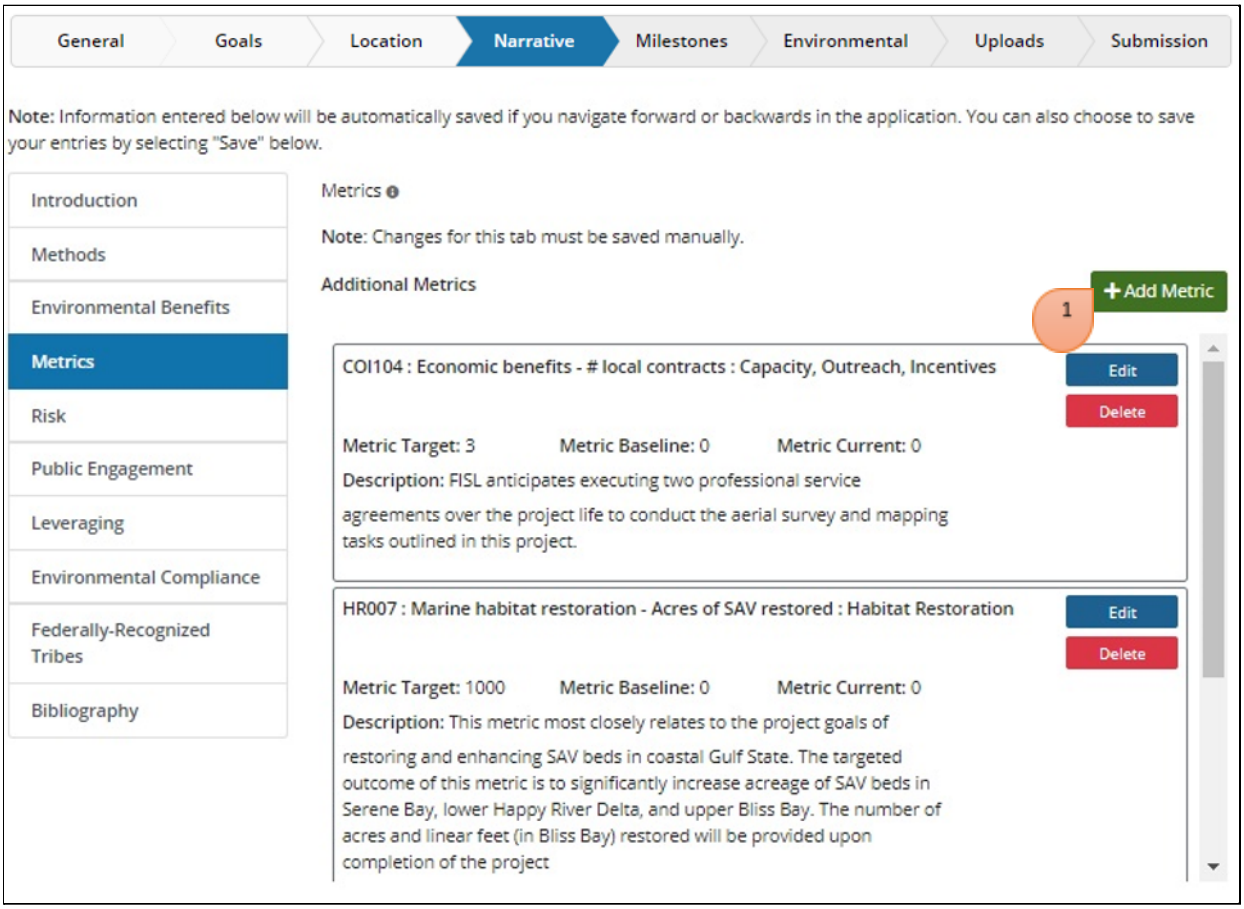
Metrics

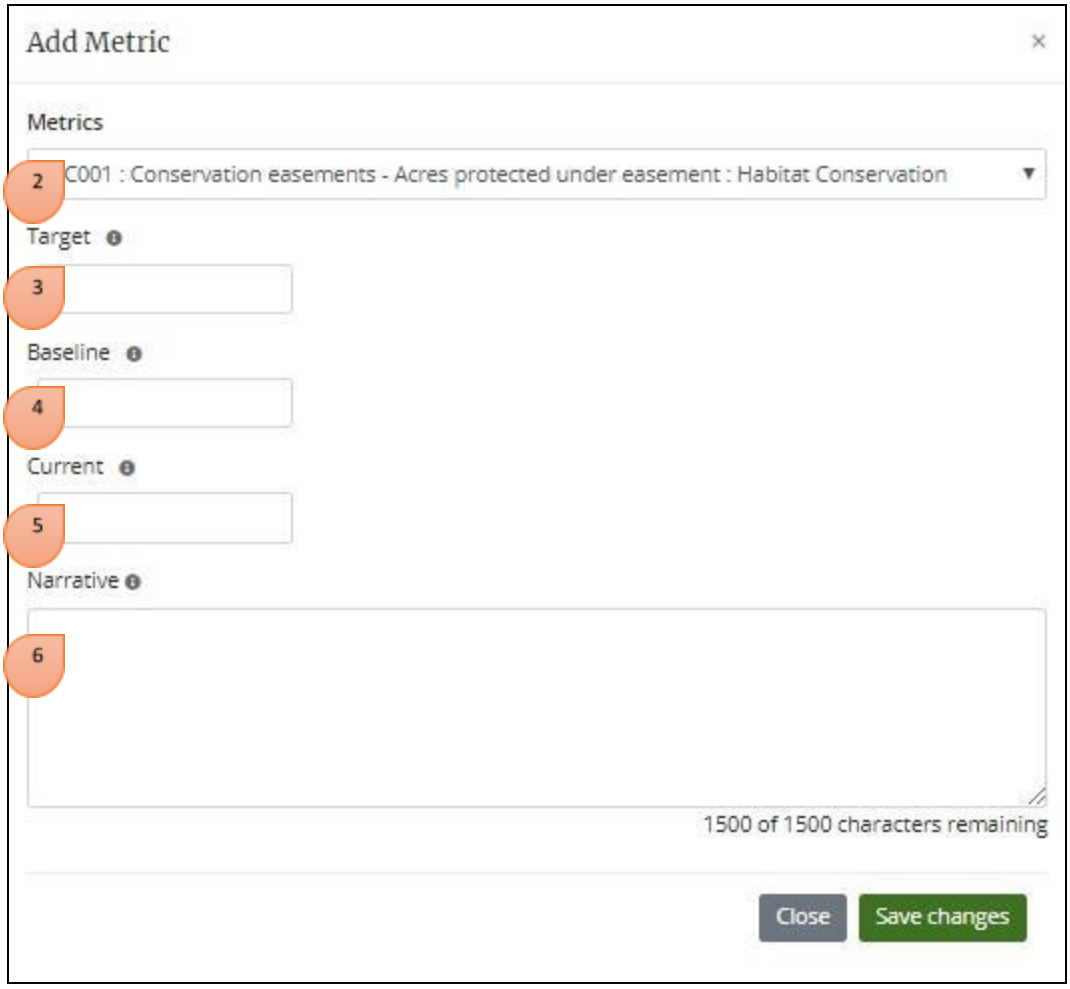
Identify metrics for evaluating project and program objectives, and describe how project or program success will be evaluated over time.

Note: Metrics identified at the proposal stage for FPL applications have been pre-populated and may need to be updated at the application stage. If an appropriate metric for this activity is not pre-populated or available in the drop-down list below, please contact Brie Bernik on Council staff (brie.bernik@restorethegulf.gov).



1. Add Metric: Select "+Add Metric" and a small window will appear. Use the drop-down menu to select an applicable metric for your application. Metrics are added one at a time.

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.



2. Metrics:** Identify metrics for evaluating project and program success. The metric(s) identified should be able to support the Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and objective(s) that the project or program has identified, as well as any anticipated quantifiable environmental benefits. A list of metrics available for selection in PIPER is available here, along with guidance on metric selection. See the Observational Data Plan Guidelines (Sections 3.0 and Appendix F) for additional information on metric selection.

Note: All metrics identified in an application should match the metrics and corresponding parameters identified in the project/program's Observational Data Plan (see here for additional guidance on developing Observational Data Plans for project/program applications).

3. Target:** For each metric, enter the estimated numerical target outcome. If the target for a metric added at the application stage has not yet been identified, such as if the number of environmental compliance documents to be developed is unknown, please indicate this by entering a target value of "0.99." *The Council acknowledges that additional planning, permitting, or other factors may result in changes to target outcomes for metrics. It is thus understood that*

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targets identified for metrics in applications are approximate and may be subject to change. Material revisions to targeted outcomes may require an FPL amendment (e.g., changes to project scope).

4. Baseline: For each metric, enter the numerical baseline from which your target number will build. In general, the Baseline and Current values for a metric will be "0" at the application stage, however, this value could be greater than "0" if the project/program is building off of another activity tracking the same metric.

5. Current: Enter the current numerical status (this number will be updated through annual reports). In general, the Baseline and Current values for a metric will be "0" at the application stage, however, this value could be greater than "0" if the project/program is building off of another activity tracking the same metric.

6. Narrative:** For each metric identified, describe how it will be used to evaluate the project or program's success over time. The character limit is 1500, including spaces.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Click **Save Changes**

Repeat the above process for adding metrics until you have added all applicable metrics for your application. You can edit or delete any metric after it has been added using the blue and red buttons associated with each added metric.

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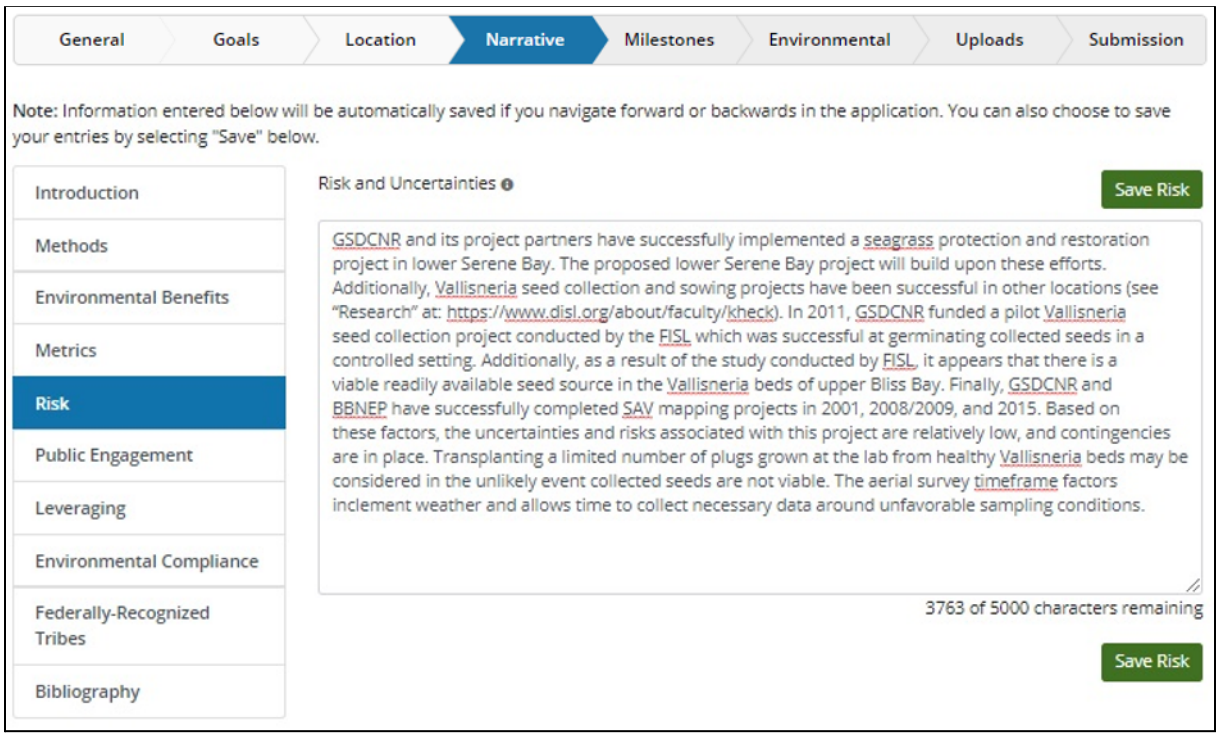
Risk



Risk and Uncertainties:** Using best available science, summarize risks and uncertainties associated with the activity, along with proposed measures to mitigate such risks and uncertainties. In general, risks and uncertainties should be considered in both the near- and long-term, and with respect to the anticipated lifespan of the proposed project/program. This section may provide perspective on such risks and uncertainties relative to the potential benefits of the project or program. For example, a long-term risk to the project/program posed by sea level rise might be offset by the potential near- and mid-term environmental benefits of the activity. Conversely, a potential benefit to the project/program might be the mitigation of future risks associated with sea level rise, subsidence, and/or storms.

The application should discuss whether the project or program is vulnerable to applicable climate risks under varying future scenarios, including but not limited to sea level rise, alterations in rainfall patterns, and/or potential increases in hurricane intensity. Consider how such risks might affect the benefits and duration of the project or program. The application should describe any design or other measures taken to mitigate these risks.

Other applicable risks and uncertainties might include questions and unknowns relating to construction feasibility, unanticipated cost increases, land rights, regulatory review, project timing, public opposition, and/or the potential for unanticipated adverse environmental and/or socio-economic impacts. Any relevant scientific uncertainties and/or data gaps should also be discussed (including the appropriate citations). Proposed measures to mitigate risks should be discussed. For applications that involve only planning (no construction), this section should discuss how the foregoing risks and uncertainties would be addressed in the planning process.

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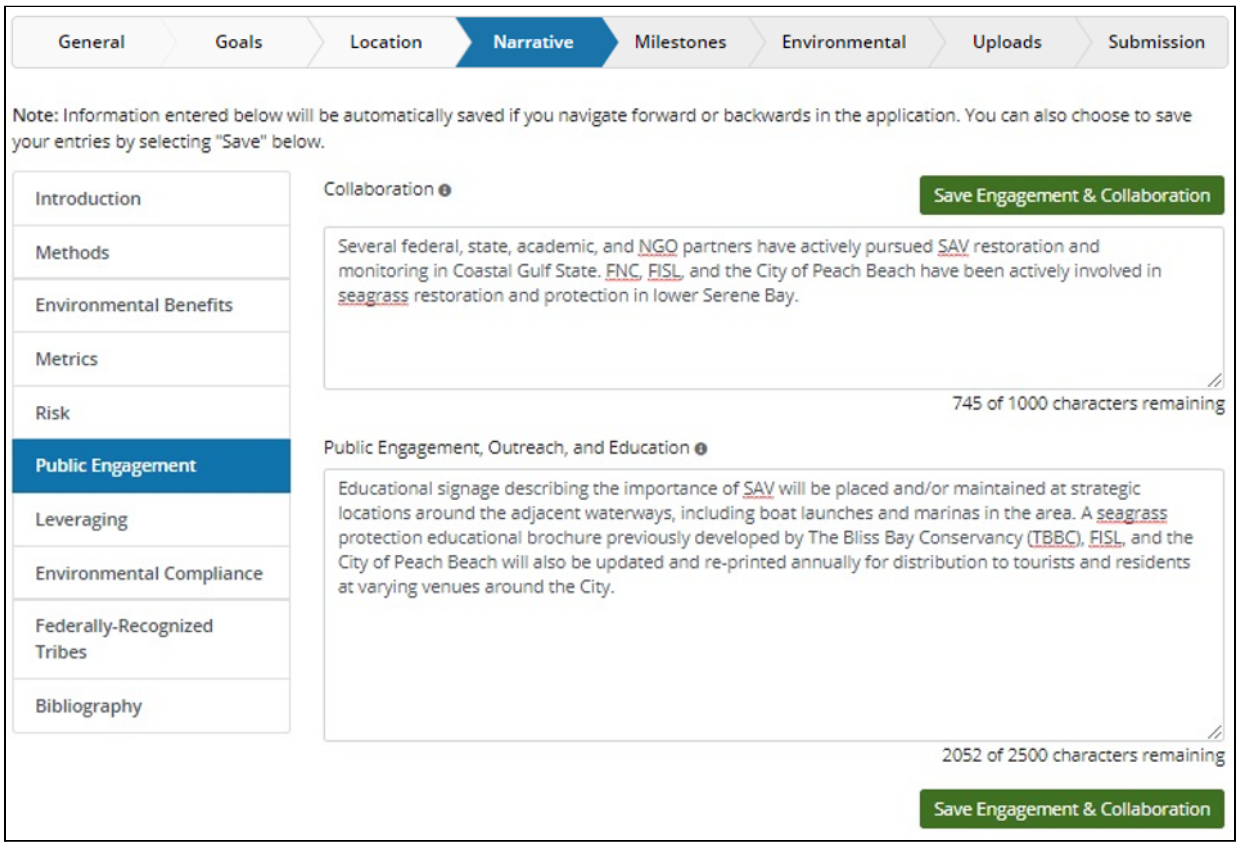
The character limit is 9500, including spaces.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Collaboration/Public Engagement



The 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update outlines the Council's commitment to engagement, inclusion, and transparency with all stakeholders, including under-represented communities and federally recognized Tribes. Program applications should describe public engagement activities and stakeholder input that was considered in the selection of potential activities within the program. Grant applications should also provide information regarding any additional considerations of stakeholder engagement, education activities, or outreach that took place between proposal submission and the request for disbursement of funds for the project. There should be communication with the Director of External Affairs as public engagement events are developed to allow a broad reach to potential attendees. Additionally, a brief summary of technical stakeholder meetings should be provided to the Director of External Affairs to meet the Council's commitment to transparency.

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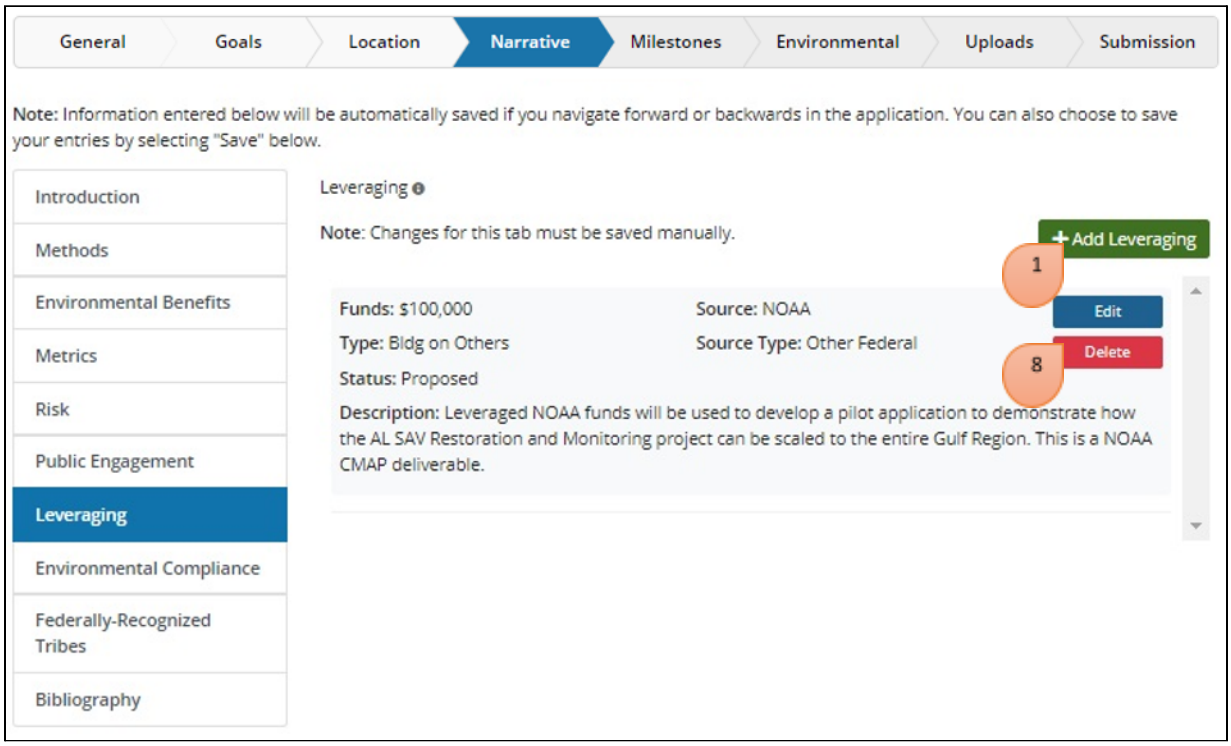
Collaboration:** As applicable, describe how collaboration was used to identify, develop, and/or refine the project/program. If applicable, the application should also include a description of the partnerships that will be used to advance the project/program. The character limit is 1000, including spaces.

Public Engagement, Outreach, and Education:** Applications should describe public engagement activities and stakeholder input that were considered in the selection of activities. The character limit is 2500, including spaces.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

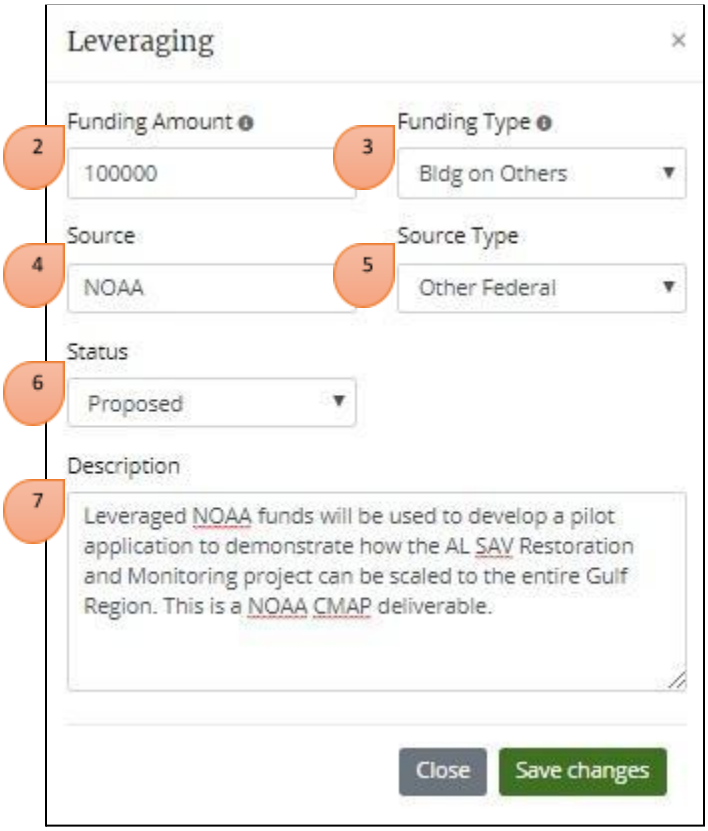
Leveraging



The 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update emphasizes the importance of collaboration among the Council members and with other Gulf restoration funding sources and stakeholders. As applicable, describe how such collaboration was used to identify, develop, and/or refine the project or program. If applicable, the application should also include a description of the partnerships that will be used to advance the project or program. Sponsors of planning projects that do not have associated Category 2 implementation applications are encouraged to provide information regarding potential implementation funding sources, when such information is available. Leveraged funds can either be described as “Co-funding,” “Adjoining,” or “Builds on Other Resources” (defined below).

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

1. In order to add a leveraged resource click "**+Add Leveraging**" and a small window will appear. Leveraging opportunities are added one at a time.



2. Funds:** Enter the total leveraged funding amount for the funding source described below.
Note: Decimal value cannot have more than 2 digits after the decimal.

3. Type:** Use the drop-down menu to select the type of leveraging you are describing. The types of funding available are:

Co-funding: Costs will be shared across funding from two or more sources. The leveraged funding from all sources is required in order to achieve the project or program objective. In cases where co-funding is to be used, the commitment of such leveraged resources is required prior to award of Council-Selected Restoration Component funds. There may be an exception to this rule in cases where a project could be scaled down in the event that the anticipated co-funding did not materialize. In such cases, the Council would need to consider whether an FPL amendment and/or award amendment would be needed to address the change in project scale;

Adjoining: Activities are proposed in a location that adjoins another existing or proposed project. Geographic proximity is key to this type of leveraging of resources across projects;

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Builds on other work: The project builds upon activities completed or ongoing as part of other projects or programs but is not captured by either of the other two types of leveraging.

4. Source:** Indicate the name of the agency/organization providing the leveraging funds.

5. Source Type:** Use the drop-down menu to select the source type for the resources that may be leveraged with your activity.

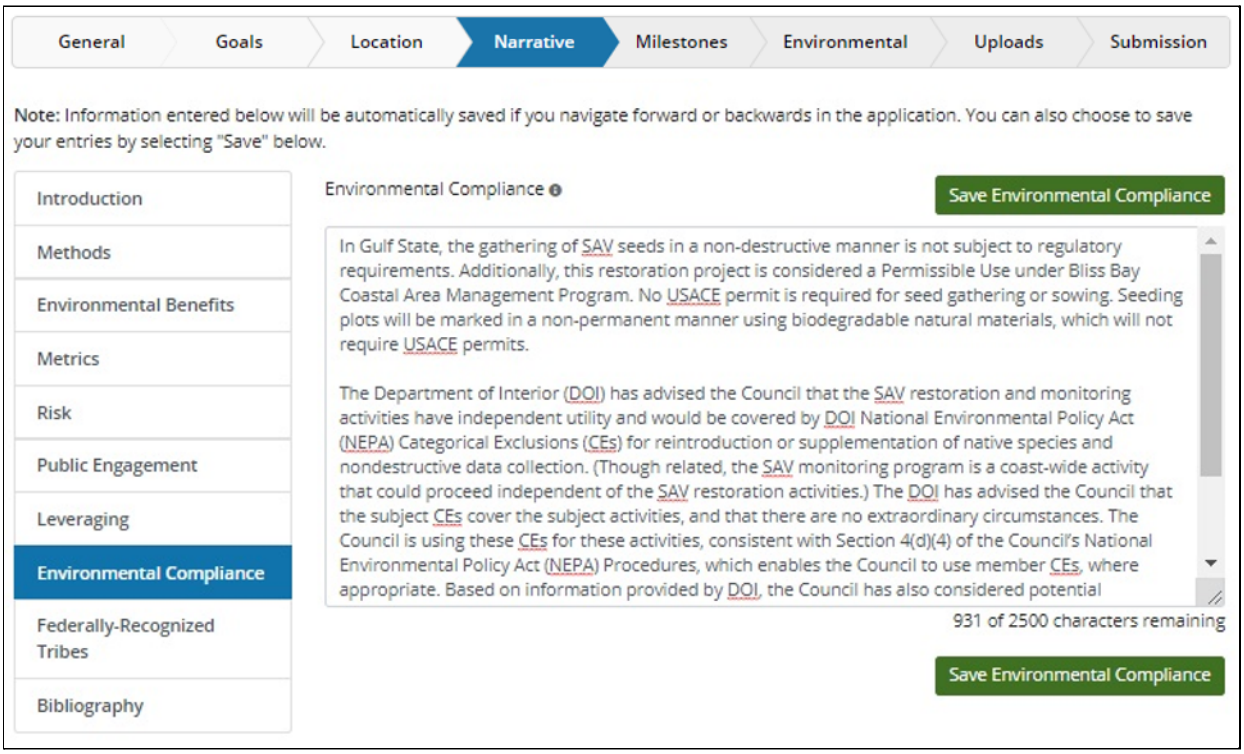
6. Status:** Use the drop-down menu to select the status of the leveraged funds being described. Options are Proposed (funds that have been proposed and may be provided if the application is awarded), Committed (funds that have been committed to be received for the activity), and Received.

7. Description:** Provide a brief narrative for the leveraging funding you are provided.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of each text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

8. You can **edit or delete** any leveraging opportunity after it has been added using the blue and red buttons associated with each leveraging opportunity.

Environmental Compliance



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Environmental Compliance:** Provide an overview of the Environmental Compliance documentation that will be updated as part of this application. The character limit is for this section 2500, including spaces. **Note:** The Environmental Compliance checklist form located under the "Environmental" tab must be completed for all applications that include implementation funding.

All applications must address environmental compliance and should indicate whether Category 1 or Category 2 status is being sought for the given activity. For applications involving implementation activities, the environmental compliance checklist available in Appendix A will be used in the application platform to summarize the status of an application with respect to applicable environmental laws as part of the Environmental section (below). Applications seeking only planning funds do not need to complete the checklist (the checklist will be locked in PIPER for planning-only applications). In addition to the checklist, following are instructions for environmental compliance related information that should be included in the submission, depending on the type of project or program.

Planning: No environmental compliance documentation is needed for applications covering only planning activities that do not involve or lead directly to ground disturbing activities that may have significant effects individually or cumulatively, and do not commit the Council or its applicants to a particular course of action affecting the environment. As noted above, the environmental compliance checklist is not applicable to activities that involve only planning. Such applications should include the following statement in the environmental compliance section: "This activity involves only planning actions that are covered by the Council's NEPA Categorical Exclusion for planning, research or design activities (Section 4(d)(3) of the Council's NEPA Procedures)." In the event that the planning activities involve geotechnical or other physical data collection, the sponsor of the planning activity is responsible for ensuring that any applicable laws are addressed before initiating such data collection.

Environmental Education and Outreach: No environmental compliance documentation is needed for applications covering only outreach, education or related activities that do not involve or lead directly to ground-disturbing activities that may have significant effects individually or cumulatively, and do not commit the Council or its applicants to a particular course of action affecting the environment. The environmental compliance checklist is not applicable to such outreach, education, and related activities. Such applications should include the following statement in the environmental compliance section: "This activity involves only implementation actions that are covered by the Council's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Categorical Exclusion for training, technical assistance, and other related activities (Section 4(d)(1)(vi) of the Council's NEPA Procedures)."

Implementation Activities with Environmental Impacts: All requests for funding approval for implementation activities that could have environmental impacts must be accompanied by up-to-date documentation of compliance with NEPA, ESA, NHPA, MSA, and FWCA, as applicable. Such documentation must fully cover the potential environmental effects of the activity. The environmental compliance section should describe how environmental compliance is addressed for the activity (e.g., adopt existing NEPA documentation, use a member CE) and confirm that the project or program is fully covered by the associated environmental compliance documentation. All such documentation should be attached to the application (or included via a link to the internet location of the documentation). Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of each text box to pull down and expand to desired

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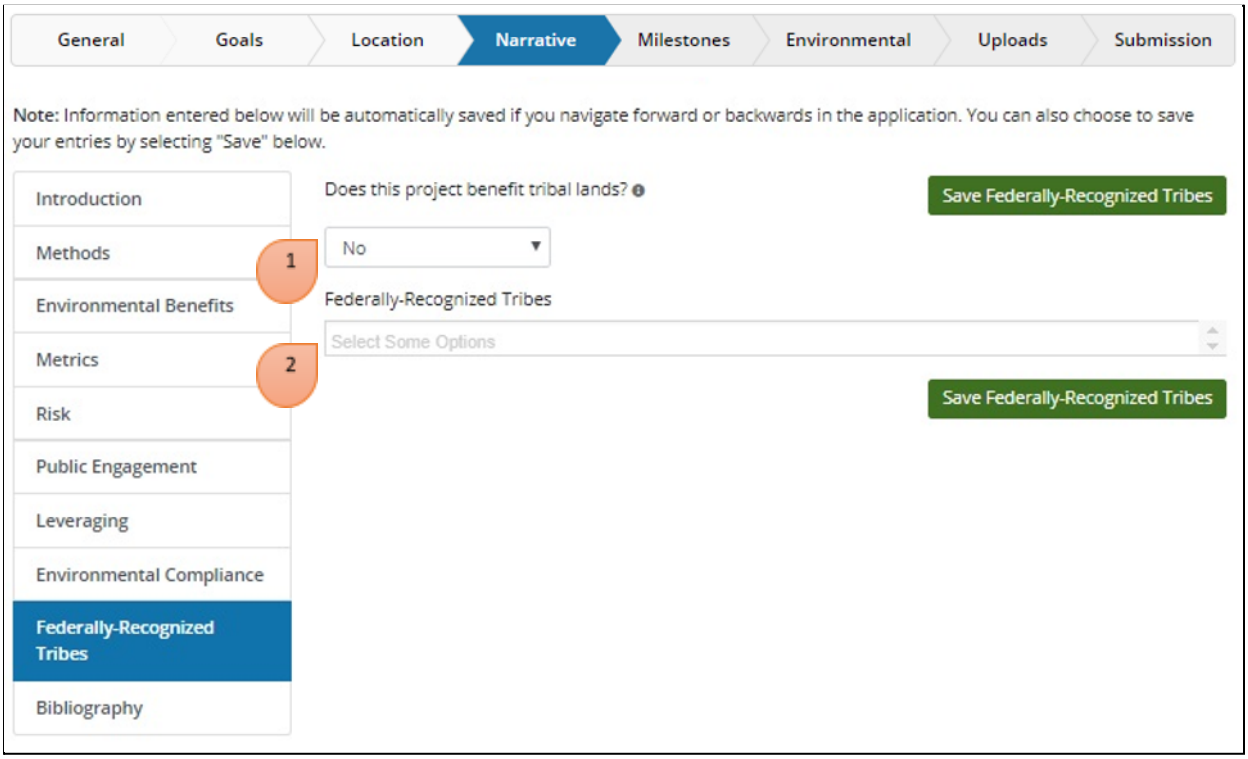
size for better visibility and ease of writing. Applicants for implementation activities must complete the environmental compliance checklist.

Federally-Recognized Tribes



1. Is this submitted on behalf of a Federally-recognized Tribe?: Use the drop-down menu to select yes or no. If you selected yes, move on to the next drop-down menu. If you selected no, you have completed this page and can continue to the "Bibliography" tab.

2. Federally Recognized Tribes: Use the drop-down menu to select all Federal Tribes associated with the activity. Multiple tribes may be selected.

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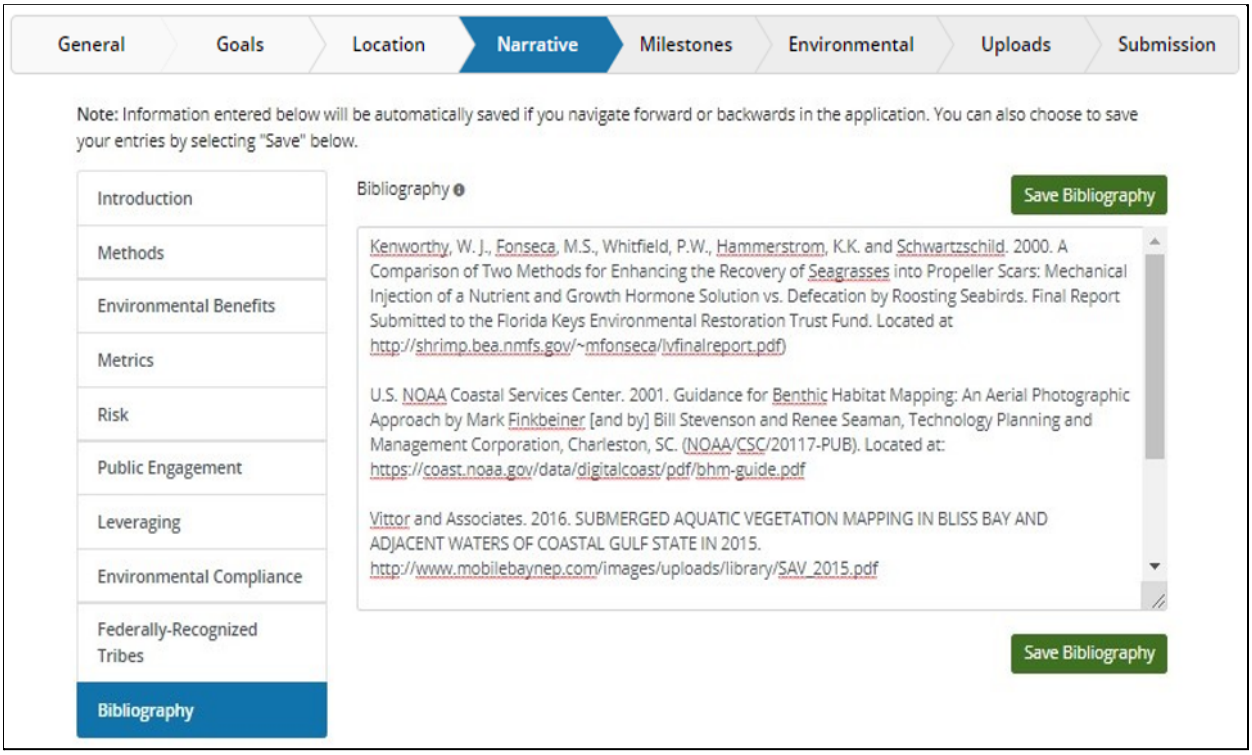
Bibliography



Please list all literature cited in the application, and please provide the appropriate links where available. There is no character limit.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of each text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

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Milestones

List and describe the project/program milestones to be carried out, activities/deliverables to be produced, the time frame for completing the activities/deliverable(s) associated with the milestone (start and end dates), and the estimated funding to be expended on each milestone. When developing milestones, consider how milestones may be used as an internal project management tool for identifying activities and deliverables and setting targets for when activities and deliverables are expected to be completed. Council staff will utilize these milestones in periodically reviewing progress, both performance and financial.

1. First, use the “Create milestone” button to specify each milestone by providing the following information:

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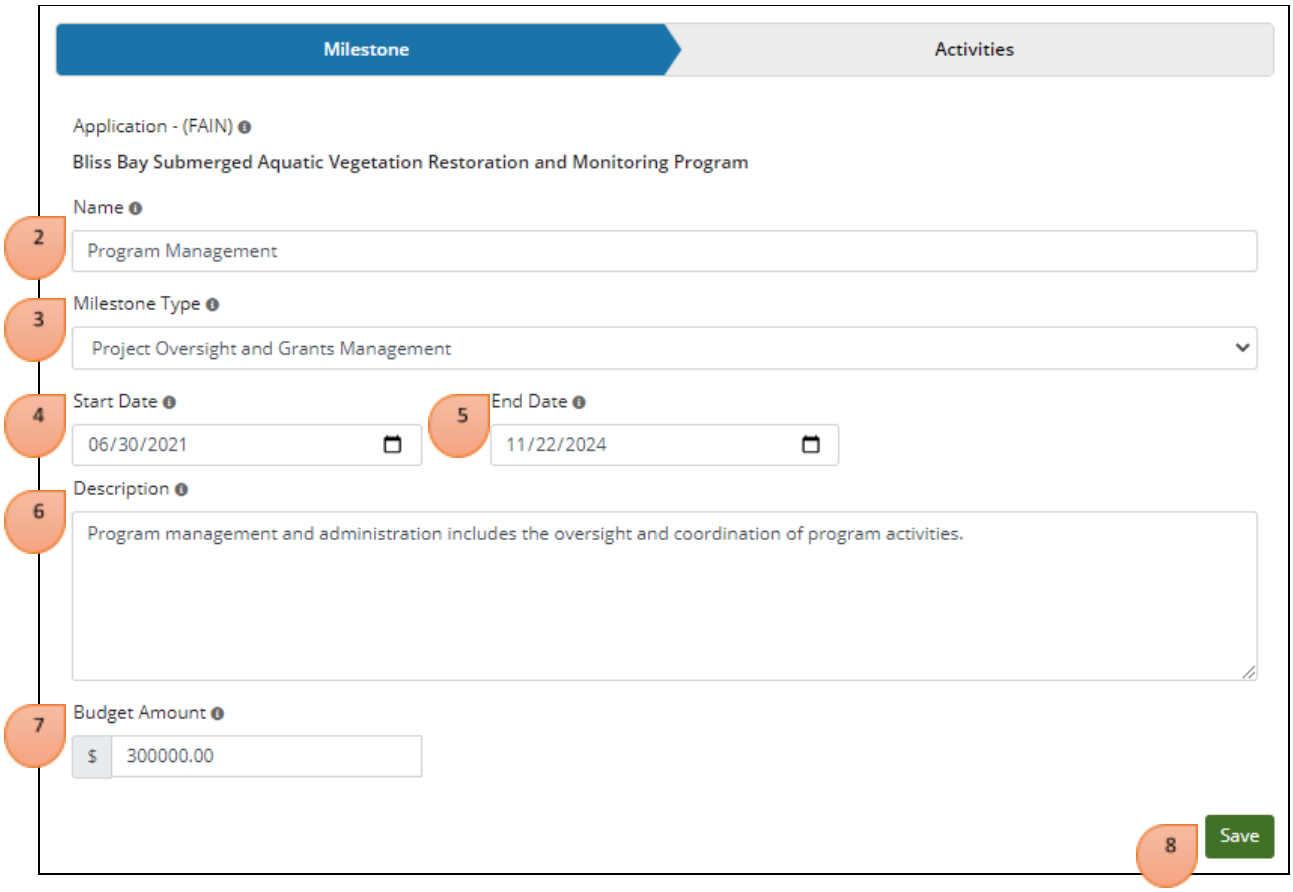

2. **Milestone Name:** Provide a unique, descriptive name for the milestone. If adding a milestone for a program with multiple projects include the unique identifier for that project in the title.
3. **Milestone Type:** Indicate the milestone type (area of effort) that best fits the milestone from the dropdown list.
4. **Start date:** Enter the projected start date for the milestone and associated activities. This is the date you expect work to start on the first activity to begin under the milestone. **Note**: projected start date should be no less than one month after the application submission date to accommodate for application review.
5. **End Date:** Enter the projected end date for the milestone. This should be the date by which all activities associated with the milestone are expected to be completed.
6. **Description:** Provide a description of the milestone and associated activities. Describe what will be accomplished under this milestone. **Note:** In addition to entering program or project milestone information in PIPER, detailed narrative regarding each milestone should be submitted as part of the application project/program narrative.
7. **Budget Amount:** Enter the total estimated cost for the specific activities, and/or for producing the deliverables, associated with the milestone. include only funding requested under this application; do not include co-funding or other leveraged funds. Also include any indirect or

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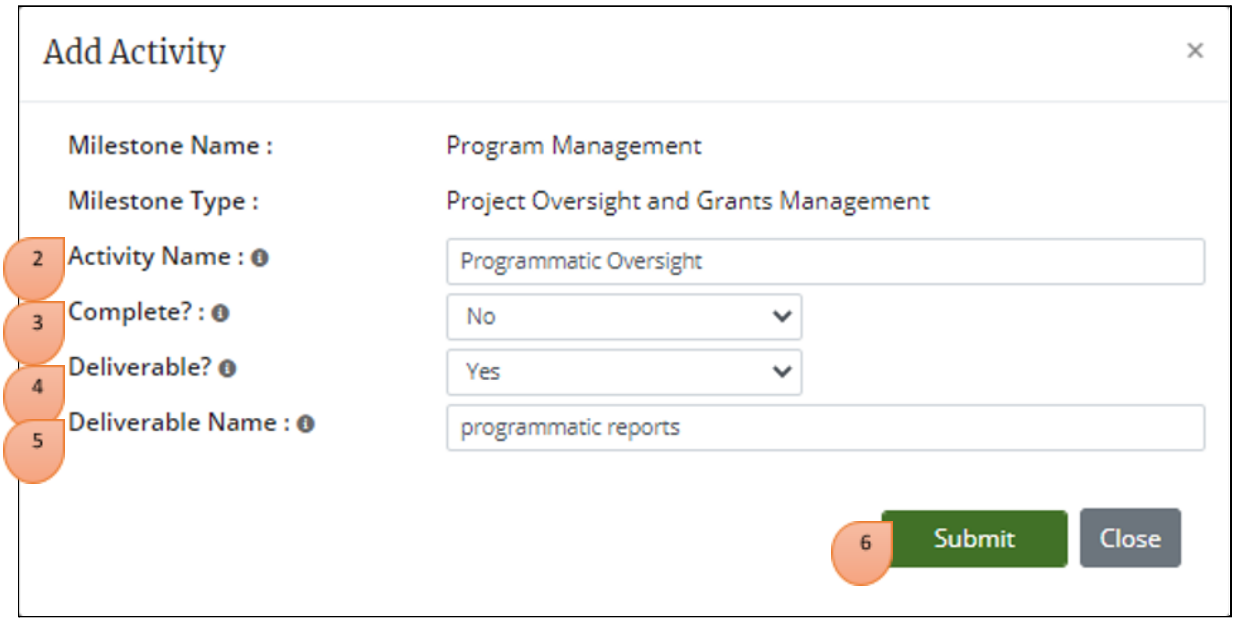
contingency costs under the milestone, as applicable. **Note**: the total estimated cost for all milestones must equal the amount of funding requested under the application.

8. Once this information is entered, click "**Save.**" Once a milestone has been saved, a minimum of one activity may be added under the milestone.

1. Navigate to the "Activities bar" and click the "Add Activity" Button to add an activity. **Note:** An activity is a discrete action that will be carried out under a Milestone. An activity may or may not include or result in one or more deliverables; if a deliverable is expected, be sure to indicate this in your Activity entry.



2. **Activity Name:** Provide a brief descriptive name for the activity. Please provide unique names for each activity under a milestone.
3. **Complete:** Indicates whether the activity is complete. At the application stage, select "No."
4. **Deliverable:** Indicate whether there are one or more deliverables associated with this activity.
5. **Deliverable Name:** If applicable, provide a brief, descriptive name for each deliverable. **Note:** deliverables should also be fully described in the narratives provided for the project.
6. Click "**Submi**t" to save the activity information.

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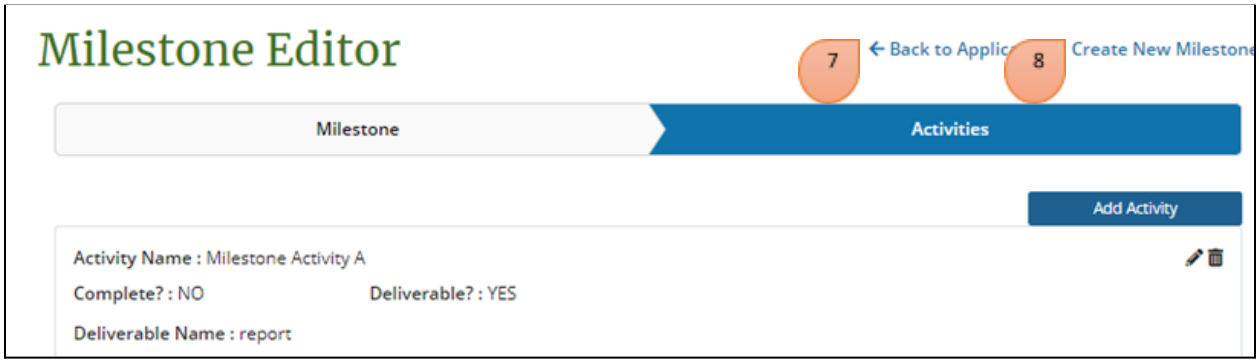
If additional activities are associated with the milestone, click the "**Add Activity**" Button and repeat the process until all activities associated with the milestone have been entered. .



Once all activities have been added for the milestone,

7. Navigate back to the milestone overview in the application by clicking "**Back to Application**" in the top right hand corner of the page. Here, you can review the milestone information entered, create new milestones using the steps described above, or navigate to another section of the application.
8. To immediately add a new milestone within the milestone editor, click "**Create new Milestone**" to navigate directly to the milestone form and create a new milestone.

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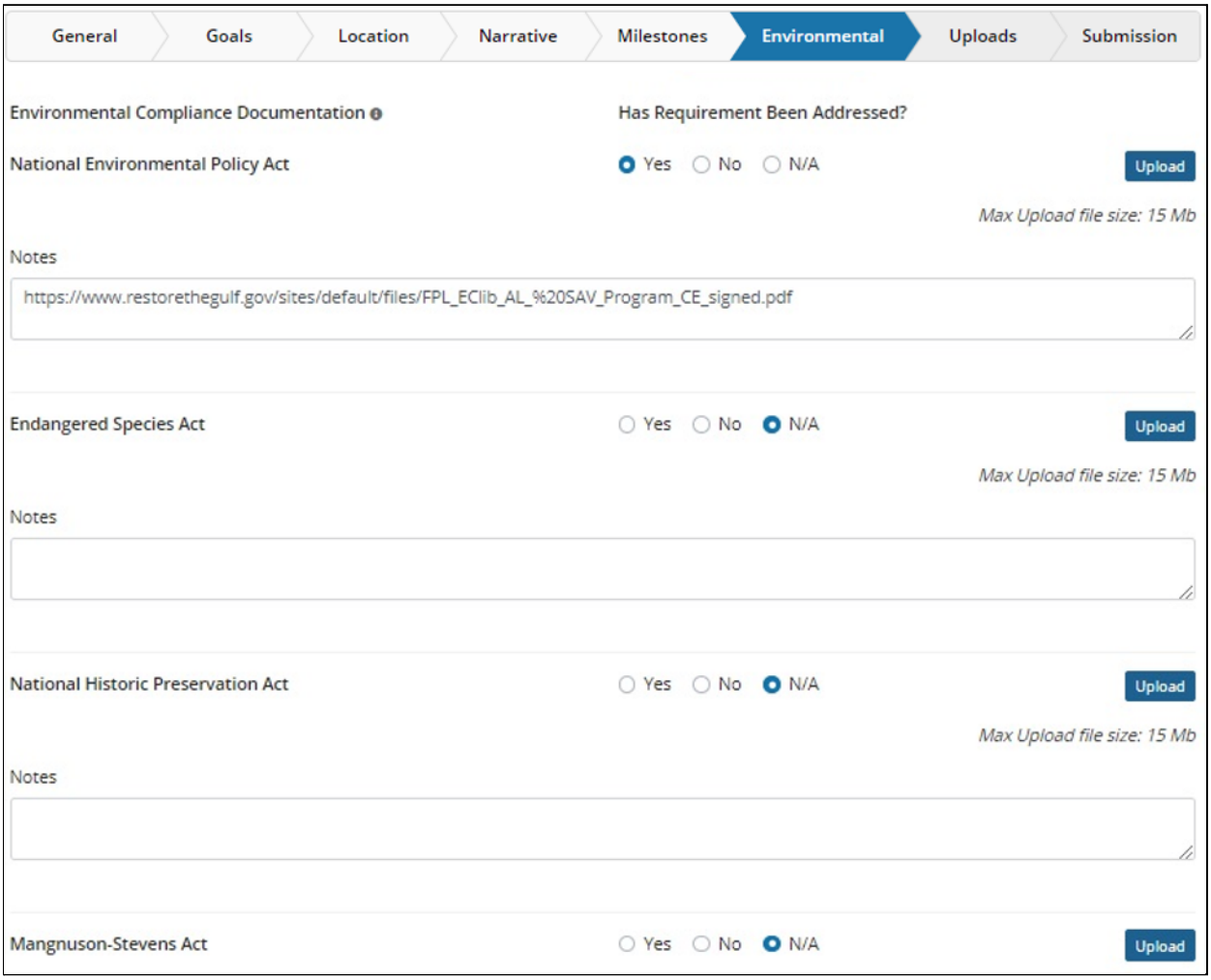
Environmental Compliance Documentation



1. Environmental Compliance Documentation: The environmental compliance checklist shown in Appendix A summarizes the status of the application with respect to applicable environmental laws. All requests for FPL Category 1 or SEP funding approval for implementation activities that could have environmental impacts must be accompanied by up-to-date documentation of compliance with NEPA, ESA, NHPA, MSA, and FWCA, as applicable. If additional laws than those listed apply, please indicate in the Environmental Compliance section of the "Narrative" tab, and provide documentation under the "Uploads" tab. **Note:** For *planning* applications this tab will be locked and no additional action is required.

2. For each law listed on this page: Indicate whether the requirement has been addressed (or if it is not applicable to your activity). Use the "Upload" button to add a file with up-to-date documentation of compliance with NEPA, ESA, NHPA, MSA, and FWCA, as applicable. If "Yes" or "No" was selected for a

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law, a note is required in the text box to further explain your compliance (or lack thereof) and documentation. After uploading documentation, you may add any additional notes in the text box below the law you are dealing with.

For more details regarding environmental compliance please refer to the Environmental Compliance section above.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of each text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue.**

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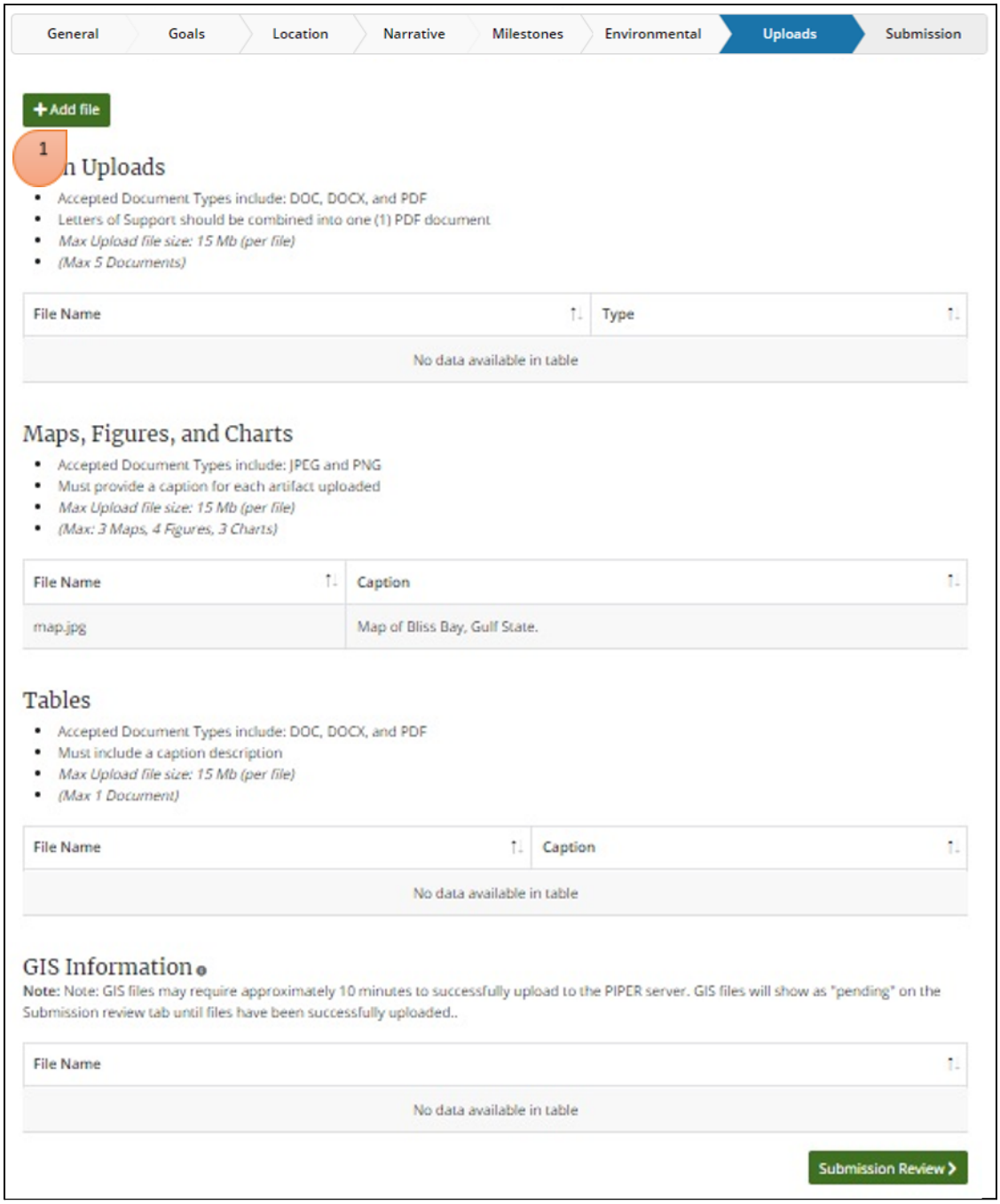
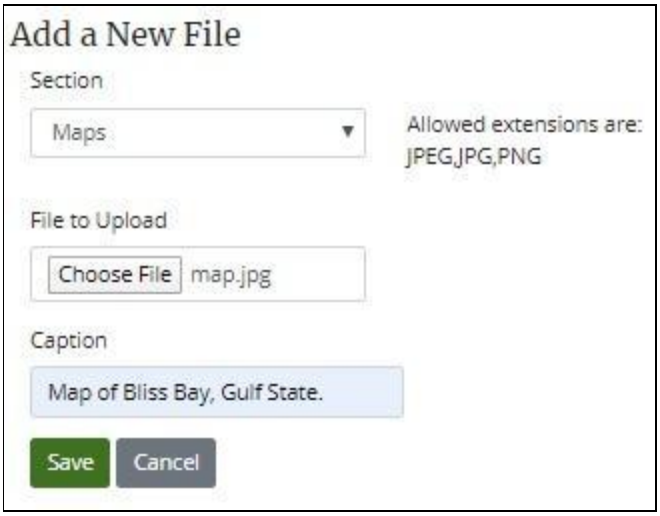
Uploads



Note: at least one map is required to meet minimum upload requirements

1. Add File: To upload a file to any of the sections listed below, click the green "+Add file" button at the top of the page. This will lead you to a drop-down menu to select the section your upload applies to.

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.



After selecting the section your file applies to, click “choose file” to upload it. Some upload types will allow you to use a text box to create a label or caption. When providing a caption, make it as descriptive of the uploaded file as possible.

Click the green **save** button when you are done uploading each file you wish to add.

Main Uploads:

- Accepted Document Types include: DOC, DOCX, PDF, XLS, and XLSX
- **Required:** Observational Data Plan (ODP). Additional guidance is available here.
- Max Upload file size: 15 Mb (per file)
- (Max 5 Documents)

Note: An “Observational Data Plan” file must be uploaded with an application for valid application submission.

Maps, Figures, and Charts:

- Accepted Document Types include: JPEG and PDF
- **Required:** One map file of project/program area.
- Provide a caption for each artifact uploaded
- Max Upload file size: 15 Mb (per file)
- (Max: 3 Maps, 4 Figures, 3 Charts)

Note: At least one map must be included with your application for valid submission.

Tables:

- Accepted Document Types include: DOC, DOCX, and PDF
- Must include a caption description
- Max Upload file size: 15 Mb (per file)
- (Max 1 Document)

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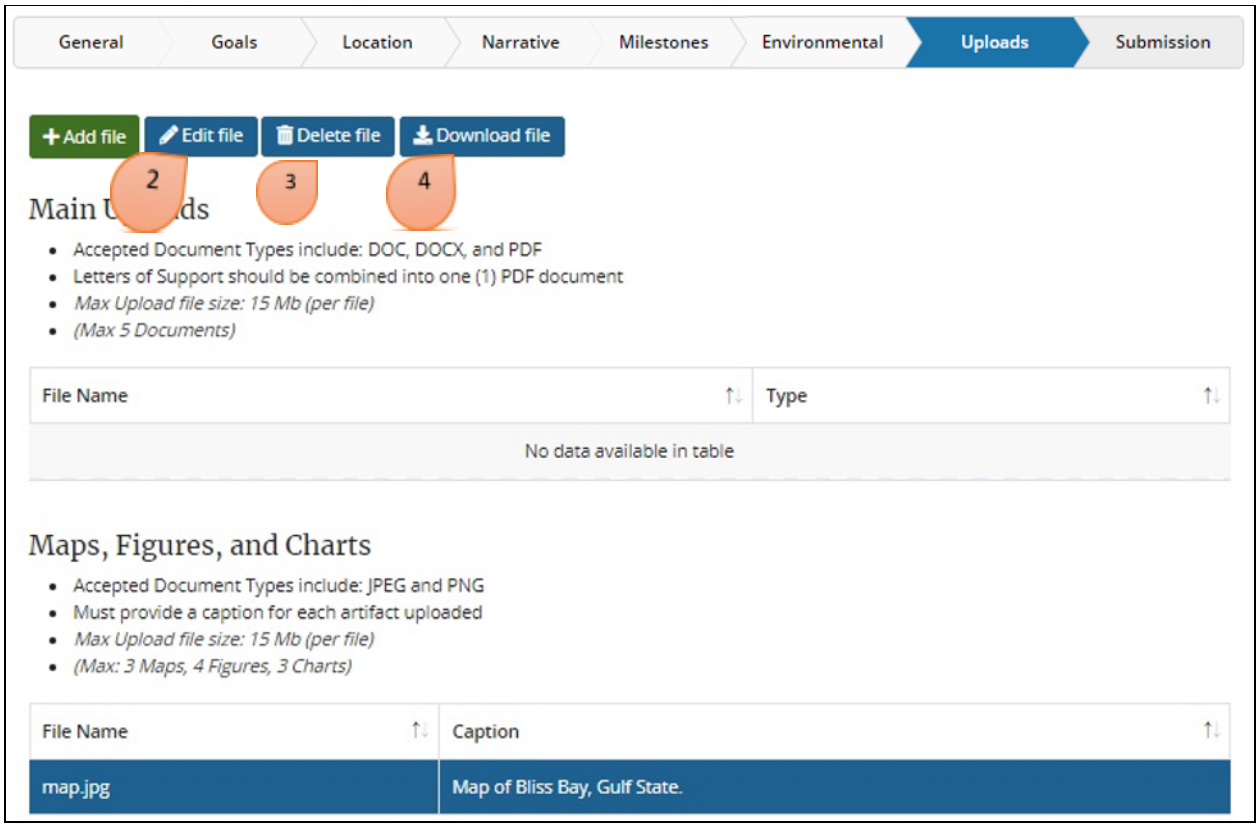
GIS Information:** As part of the application, GIS data needs to be provided along with ISO metadata that describes the project location using either points, lines, and/or polygons. GIS data uploaded must be in the template format. The downloadable GIS Template to upload is located under the "Help" tab at the top of your webpage. Required attributes in the GIS data tables include application title, component name, and GIS contact. Please be aware that your GIS file should only include geometries you have data for. If you only have a polygon, please delete the point and line feature classes from your GIS file before zipping and uploading.

For additional information on GIS files, please contact Michelle Fischer (michelle.fischer@restorethegulf.gov).

Note: Uploaded GIS data validation compares your uploaded GIS file to the GIS template and can take up to 10 minutes. If your "pre-submit" validation is failing on the uploaded GIS data file, please try to re-validate in a few minutes.



2. To **edit** an uploaded file, select the file you wish to edit and scroll to the top of the page. Several blue buttons will appear next to "+Add file." Select the blue "Edit file" button. This will return you to the page used to add the file. You can change the file type using the drop-down menu, replace the existing file, and change your caption using this page. When you are done click **save**.

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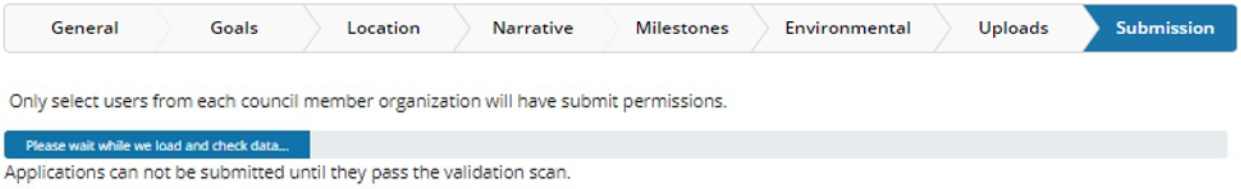
3. To **delete** an uploaded file, select the file you wish to edit and scroll to the top of the page. Several blue buttons will appear next to "+Add file." Select the blue "Delete file" button.

4. To **download** an uploaded file, select the file you wish to edit and scroll to the top of the page. Several blue buttons will appear next to "+Add file." Select the blue "Download file" button. This will result in a new window popping up, where you can save your file in the location of your choice.

5. Click the green **Submission Review** button or continue to the Submission tab to begin the submission process.

Submission

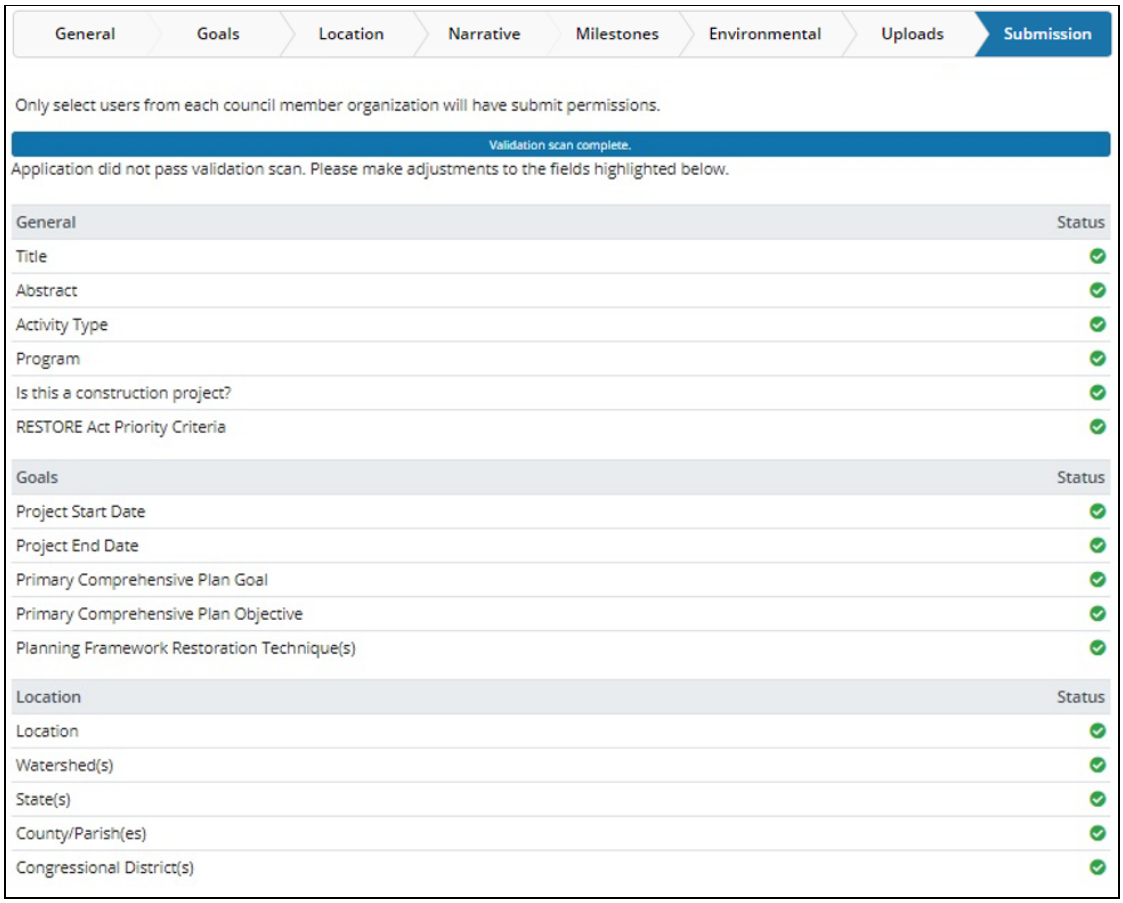


After clicking on the submission tab (or the Submission Review button), a validation scan of the information included in your application submission will begin. Applications cannot be submitted until they pass the validation scan. When the scan is complete, a red highlight will indicate which fields under each section need attention. You may click on the red highlighted text to jump to the section of the application that needs review. If everything is completed correctly, your application will be submitted for review.

Note: Only select users from each Council member organization will have the ability to submit an application. If you believe you should have "Submitting" privileges, and are not able to "Submit" your application, please reach out to helpdesk@restorethegulf.gov.

*****In addition to submitting your application in PIPER additional budgeting information must be submitted in GrantSolutions to complete your application for funding. For a complete list of the information to be submitted in GrantSolutions please refer to the RESTORE Council Grant/IAA Application Checklist.*****

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.


General
Goals
Location
Narrative
Milestones
Environmental
Uploads
Submission
Only select users from each council member organization will have submit permissions.
Validation scan complete.
Application did not pass validation scan. Please make adjustments to the fields highlighted below.
General
Status
Title
Abstract
Activity Type
Program
Is this a construction project?
RESTORE Act Priority Criteria
Goals
Status
Project Start Date
Project End Date
Primary Comprehensive Plan Goal
Primary Comprehensive Plan Objective
Planning Framework Restoration Technique(s)
Location
Status
Location
Watershed(s)
State(s)
County/Parish(es)
Congressional District(s)

Program Applications with Project-Specific Workplans

This section provides guidance on submitting a program application that has (or will be amended to have) project-specific workplans. Guidance on information to include in PIPER is shown in RED below.

General Information Tab

1. Title:** Create a title for your application using 100 characters or less (including spaces).

Provide the name of the Program as approved in the FPL or SEP document.

2. Abstract:** In 1500 characters or less, summarize the summarize the application program, including the following information: :

-program name

-high-level description of program, including the purpose and goal of the program

-anticipated environmental benefits of the program

-location(s)

-total anticipated cost (and amount of Council funding being requested, if different than the total cost)

-timeline

-partners

-other information that might be needed to provide the reader with an overview of the activity

This section should be written for the general public . The language provided here may be used verbatim for fact sheets or other public facing documents.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

The following example abstract may be used as a reference:

Example Program Abstract

The State of Bliss, through the Bliss Department of Natural Resources (BDNR), is requesting $8 million in Council-Selected Restoration Component funding for the Council-approved Bliss Watershed Hydrologic Restoration and Monitoring Program (BWHRMP). The program will include planning for project-specific implementation

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activities to restore hydrologic connectivity, and in turn, water quality and quantity in Bliss Bay, Upper Serene Bay, and Happy River Delta. These activities will be implemented through a series of hydrologic improvement projects that will be identified using a process developed during the planning phase. Developing strategies to address hydrologic connectivity in the Bliss Watershed will support the primary RESTORE Council comprehensive plan goal of restoring water quality and quantity.

This program will result in environmental benefits such as improved flow regime dynamics, nutrient cycling, salinity gradients, wildlife habitat and biodiversity. It will also enhance and support recreational activities already popular in Bliss Bay, Upper Serene Bay, and Happy River. BDNR will develop a process for project selection under the BWHRMP that will maximize benefits by utilizing the best available science to identify and administer funding to a series of projects that link environmental benefits and leverage the work of other restoration projects in the Bliss Watershed. Program duration is 7 years.

3. Category:** Indicate which category your application falls in at the time of application (Planning, Implementation, or Planning and Implementation). If the program phase you are applying for is planning-only at this time, and project-specific implementation plans will be provided with future award amendments, select PLANNING.

4. Activity Type:** Select Program.

5. Program:**Select the appropriate pre-populated FPL or SEP program from the drop-down list. **Note:** If the appropriate program does not appear in the drop-down list, please contact the PIPER Helpdesk.

6. Co-Sponsoring Agencies:** Select all co-sponsoring agencies for this application. If there are none, this field may be left blank.

7. Check the box** if the application is a construction project. If the program will have construction in the future, but does not currently have construction activities for which you are requesting funds, do not check this box.

8. Project Duration (in years):** Enter the total anticipated duration of the program award (i.e., number of years to complete the entire program). In your request, include time required for appropriate permitting, pre-construction and post-construction monitoring (if applicable).

9. Requested Funding:** Enter the amount of funding you are requesting at this time for your program. **Note:** For FPL programs with funding in Category 2, this number will need to be revised (as the full Program request will be pulled forward from the PIPER Proposal Module). Please align this amount with the funding amount requested for this application in GrantSolutions.

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FPL Application:

10. RESTORE Act Priority Criteria:** If you are requesting funding for an FPL program this information will be auto-populated, and does not need to be revised.

11. Priority Criteria Justification:** If you are requesting funding for an FPL program this information will be auto-populated, and does not need to be revised.

SEP Application:

10. Primary Eligible Activity: Select the Primary Eligible Activity identified in the approved SEP.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue.**

If a required field is left empty, or if a field is occupied incorrectly, a red text will appear under the problem fields after clicking the green save button at the bottom of the page

Once you complete and save the General tab, you can navigate to any of the other tabs in the order that you wish.

Goals Tab

Your Comprehensive Plan Goals indicate which RESTORE Council goals you intend to address through your program. Your Comprehensive Plan Objectives are more specific actions that will lead to the achievement of the overall goal. The data fields populated on this tab are the same for both FPL and SEP applications.

1&2. Date: Select the anticipated start and end dates for your program.

3&4. Primary:** Select one primary goal and one primary objective for your program. Use the drop-down menus to select the **Primary Comprehensive Plan Goal** and the **Primary Comprehensive Plan Objective** that best describes your application. The primary goal and objectives identified should align with the information provided in the approved FPL or SEP activity description.

5&6. Secondary:** If there are additional goals and objectives applicable to your application, use the fields titled "**Secondary Comprehensive Plan Goals**" and "**Secondary Comprehensive Plan Objectives**" to add any secondary goals and objectives your activity will address. Using the drop-down menus, you can add multiple secondary goals and objectives. If your activity does not address additional goals or objectives, skip these fields. During workplan submission, secondary goals and objectives should be added to these selections as needed to incorporate those identified in project workplans.

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Note: Metrics and quantifiable targets will need to be identified for each Comprehensive Plan goal and objective associated with a program. This includes primary and secondary goals/objectives.

7. Planning Framework Restoration Technique(s):** Use the drop-down menu to select the appropriate Planning Framework technique(s) for your program at the time of application. Multiple techniques may be selected. Please reference the Additional Metric Guidance for more information, and see the 2019 Planning Framework for descriptions of Council restoration techniques. During workplan submission, additional techniques should be selected as needed to incorporate those identified in project workplans.

Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue**.

Project Narrative Tab

Introduction and Overview

Introduction and Overview:** Fully describe the program (in 9500 characters or less), including the following information: description of the general activities anticipated under the program, anticipated environmental benefits, environmental stressor(s) being addressed, location, total cost (and amount of Council funding being applied for, if different than total cost), timeline, partners, and other information that might be needed to provide the reader with a full understanding of the activity. This section may briefly discuss and/or reference the specific considerations that will be discussed in other sections of the application.

Describe how the program:

- Will be carried out in the Gulf Coast Region,
- Addresses one or more of the Council's Goals and Objectives, and
- Advances the commitments set forth in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

The primary Comprehensive Plan goal and objective must be identified.

A primary purpose of this section is to make a clear case for how the program meets the applicable Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and objective(s).

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Methods

Methods:** Describe the methods to be used in the program, and the reasons that these methods were selected. All methods should be justified using best available science (provide citations); methods may also be justified by other reasons (e.g., cost-effectiveness, technical feasibility). This section should be

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used to describe, in detail, the methods to be used (or that were used) to identify project-specific activities under a program. This description should be supported by best available science (i.e., include citations).

As project-specific workplans are developed, this section should be updated to list each project name, applicant name, funding amount & brief overview of each workplan. Also include the following language: "As projects are identified and sub-awarded through the amendment process, they will be listed here and workplans will be uploaded including more specific details of each project."

The character limit is 9500, including spaces.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Environmental Benefits

Environmental benefits:** In addition to the discussion of anticipated environmental benefits in the Introduction and Overview section, provide a detailed description of anticipated environmental benefits of the program (in 5000 characters or less). Environmental benefits can be achieved through multiple activities that could be considered for funding (e.g., planning, implementation, science, education, improved resilience). Such benefits can be quantitative (e.g., acres restored or conserved, amount of nutrients or other pollutant reductions) and/or qualitative (e.g., increased community resilience, increased public stewardship of natural resources). Such benefits must be discussed in reference to one or more underlying environmental stressors identified by best available science and/or an applicable ecosystem restoration plan(s). Some applications such as those involving natural resource stewardship and improving science-based decision-making may not specifically address an underlying environmental stressor. Discuss the rationale for the anticipated duration/sustainability of the environmental benefits that would accrue from the activity (consistent with the following discussion of risks and uncertainties).

Metrics[2]

Identify metrics for evaluating the objectives of the program and its constituent projects, and describe how program and project success will be evaluated over time. If projects with trackable outcomes are yet to be identified, corresponding metrics are not required (but may be included). During workplan submission, metrics should be added as appropriate to support the objectives and quantify the environmental benefits of specific projects.

[2] Detailed instructions for adding and editing metrics are available here.

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Note: Metrics identified at the proposal stage have been pre-populated for FPL applications and may need to be added, removed, or revised at the application stage. If an appropriate metric for this activity is not pre-populated or available in the drop-down list below, please contact Brie Bernik on Council staff (brie.bernik@restorethegulf.gov).

1. Add Metric: Select "+Add Metric" and a small window will appear. Use the drop-down menu to select an applicable metric for your application. Metrics are added one at a time.

2. Metrics:** Identify metrics for evaluating the success of the program and its constituent projects. The metric(s) identified should be able to support the Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and objective(s) identified for the program (including those identified for each constituent project), as well as any anticipated quantifiable environmental benefits. A list of metrics available for selection in PIPER is available here, along with guidance on metric selection. See the Observational Data Plan Guidelines (Sections 3.0 and Appendix F) for additional information on metric selection.

Note: All metrics identified in an application should match the metrics and corresponding parameters identified in the project/program's Observational Data Plan (see here for additional guidance on developing Observational Data Plans for program applications).

3. Target:** For each metric, enter the estimated numerical target outcome of the program(e.g., 250). If the target for a metric added at the application stage has not yet been identified, such as if the number of environmental compliance documents to be developed is unknown, please indicate this by entering a target value of "0.99." *The Council acknowledges that additional planning, permitting, or other factors may result in changes to target outcomes for metrics. It is thus understood that targets identified for metrics in applications are approximate and may be subject to change. Material revisions to targeted outcomes may require an FPL amendment (e.g., changes to project scope).*

4. Baseline: For each metric, enter the numerical baseline from which your target number will build. In general, the Baseline and Current values for a metric will be "0" at the application stage, however, this value could be greater than "0" if the project/program is building off of another activity tracking the same metric.

5. Current: For each metric, enter the current numerical status (this number will be updated through annual reports). In general, the Baseline and Current values for a metric will be "0" at the application stage, however, this value could be greater than "0" if the project/program is building off of another activity tracking the same metric.

6. Narrative:** For each metric identified, describe how it will be used to evaluate the program's success over time. As projects are identified, list those with outcomes that the metric will track and describe project-specific targets. This list should be revised accordingly during workplan submission, if applicable. The character limit is 1500, including spaces.

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Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Click **Save Changes**

Repeat the above process for adding metrics until you have added all applicable metrics for your application. You can edit or delete any metric after it has been added using the blue and red buttons associated with each added metric.

Risk

Risk and Uncertainties:** Using best available science, summarize risks and uncertainties associated with the program, along with proposed measures to mitigate such risks and uncertainties. In general, risks and uncertainties should be considered in both the near- and long-term, and with respect to the anticipated lifespan of the proposed program. This section may provide perspective on such risks and uncertainties relative to the potential benefits of the program. For example, a long-term risk to the program posed by sea level rise might be offset by the potential near- and mid-term environmental benefits of the activity. Conversely, a potential benefit to the program might be the mitigation of future risks associated with sea level rise, subsidence, and/or storms.

The application should discuss whether the program is vulnerable to applicable climate risks under varying future scenarios, including but not limited to sea level rise, alterations in rainfall patterns, and/or potential increases in hurricane intensity. Consider how such risks might affect the benefits and duration of the program. The application should describe any design or other measures taken to mitigate these risks.

Other applicable risks and uncertainties might include questions and unknowns relating to construction feasibility, unanticipated cost increases, land rights, regulatory review, project timing, public opposition, and/or the potential for unanticipated adverse environmental and/or socio-economic impacts. Any relevant scientific uncertainties and/or data gaps should also be discussed (including the appropriate citations). Proposed measures to mitigate risks should be discussed. For applications that involve only planning (no construction), this section should discuss how the foregoing risks and uncertainties would be addressed in the planning process.

This section should also include the following language, “Specific risks and uncertainties of the projects to be funded under this program are available in the project-specific workplan uploads section.”

The character limit is 9500, including spaces.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

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Collaboration/Public Engagement

Collaboration:** As applicable, describe how collaboration was used (or will be used) to identify, develop, and/or refine the projects to be identified under the program. If applicable, the application should also include a description of the partnerships that will be used to advance the program. The character limit is 1000, including spaces.

Public Engagement, Outreach, and Education:** Applications should describe public engagement activities and stakeholder input that were (or will be) considered in the selection of projects under the program. The character limit is 2500, including spaces.

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of the text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Leveraging[3]

For programs provide information on leveraged funds that will apply across the program. If including leveraging information, please also add the following language: "Additional project-specific leveraging details can be found in the uploaded workplan."

Environmental Compliance

Environmental Compliance:** Provide an overview of the Environmental Compliance documentation that will be updated as part of this application. Be sure to include the following in the text box: "Project-specific environmental compliance is provided with project-specific workplans under uploads**."**

The character limit is for this section 2500, including spaces. **Note:** The Environmental Compliance checklist form located under the "Environmental" tab must be completed for implementation projects. The checklist does not need to be completed for planning-only projects.

Federally-Recognized Tribes

1. Is this submitted on behalf of a Federally-recognized Tribe?: Use the drop-down menu to select yes or no. If you selected yes, move on to the next drop-down menu. If you selected no, you have completed this page and can continue to the "Bibliography" tab.

2. Federally Recognized Tribes: Use the drop-down menu to select all Federal Tribes associated with the activity. Multiple tribes may be selected.

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[3] Detailed instructions on adding and editing leveraging information is available here.

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Bibliography

Please list all literature cited in the PIPER program application narrative, and please provide the appropriate links where available. There is no character limit. If applicable, also add “See uploaded project-specific work plans for citations."

Use the light grey square in the bottom right-hand corner of each text box to pull down and expand to desired size for better visibility and ease of writing.

Milestones

List and describe the project/program milestones to be carried out, activities/deliverables to be produced, the time frame for completing the activities/deliverable(s) associated with the milestone (start and end dates), and the estimated funding to be expended on each milestone. When developing milestones, consider how milestones may be used as an internal project management tool for identifying activities and deliverables and setting targets for when activities and deliverables are expected to be completed. Council staff will utilize these milestones in periodically reviewing progress, both performance and financial. For programs that include individual projects that require workplans, include one or more milestones related to the implementation and oversight of the program and at least one milestone for each individual project.

First, use the “**Create milestone**” button to specify each milestone by providing the following information:

1. **Milestone Name**: Provide a unique, descriptive name for the milestone. If a program milestone relates to a specific project under the program, include the unique identifier for that project in the title.
2. **Milestone Type:** Indicate the milestone type (area of effort) that best fits the milestone from the dropdown list. .
3. **Start date:** Enter the projected start date for the milestone and associated activities. This is the date you expect work to start on the first activity to begin under the milestone. **Note**: projected start date should be no less than one month after the application submission date to accomodate for application review.
4. **End Date:** Enter the projected end date for the milestone. This should be the date by which all activities associated with the milestone are expected to be completed.
5. **Description:** Provide a description of the milestone and associated activities. Describe what will be accomplished under this milestone. **Note:** In addition to entering program milestone information in PIPER, detailed narrative regarding each program and/or project milestone should be submitted as part of the application narrative or project workplan.

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6. **Budget Amount:** Enter the total estimated cost for the specific activities, and/or for producing the deliverables, associated with the milestone. include only funding requested under this application; do not include co-funding or other leveraged funds. Also include any indirect or contingency costs under the milestone, as applicable. **Note:** the total estimated cost for all milestones must equal the amount of funding requested under the application.

Once this information is entered, click "**Save.**" Once a milestone has been saved, a minimum of one activity per milestone may be added under the milestone.

Navigate to the "Activities bar" and click the "Add Activity" Button to add an activity. **Note:** An activity is a discrete action that will be carried out under a Milestone. An activity may or may not include or result in one or more deliverables; if a deliverable is expected, be sure to indicate this in your Activity entry.

1. **Activity Name:** Provide a brief descriptive name for the activity. Please provide unique names for each activity under a milestone.
2. **Complete**: Indicates whether the activity is complete. At the application stage, select "**No**."
3. **Deliverable:** Indicate whether there are one or more deliverables associated with this activity.
4. **Deliverable Name:** If applicable, provide a brief, descriptive name for each deliverable. **Note:** deliverables should also be fully described in the narratives provided for the project.
5. Click "**Submit**" to save the activity information.

If additional activities are associated with the milestone, click the "Add Activity" Button and repeat the process until all activities associated with the milestone have been entered.

Once all activities have been added for the milestone, Navigate back to the milestone overview in the application by clicking "**Back to Application**" in the top right hand corner of the page. Here, you can review the milestone information entered, create new milestones using the steps described above, or navigate to another section of the application.

Or, To immediately add a new milestone within the milestone editor, click "**Create new Milestone**" to navigate directly to the milestone form and create a new milestone.

Environmental Compliance Documentation[4]

For programs with project specific workplans indicate N/A for each law listed on this page. Use the green save button at the bottom of the page to **save your progress and continue.**

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[4] Please reference the Environmental Compliance guidance for detailed instructions on providing Environmental Compliance Information in PIPER.

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Uploads[5]

For programs with project-specific workplans the following should be uploaded under the Uploads tab in PIPER:

Click the green **save** button when you are done uploading each file you wish to add.

Main Uploads:

- Accepted Document Types include: DOC, DOCX, PDF, XLS, and XLSX
- Program Observational Data Plan (ODP). (Link to Program ODP template) Additional guidance on completing a program ODP is available here.
- Project-Specific Workplan(s). (Link to Project-Specific Workplan template)
- Max Upload file size: 15 Mb (per file)

Maps, Figures, and Charts:

- Accepted Document Types include: JPEG and PDF
- Must provide a caption for each artifact uploaded
- Max Upload file size: 15 Mb (per file)
- (Max: 3 Maps, 4 Figures, 3 Charts)

Note: At least one map must be included with your application for valid submission.

Tables:

- Accepted Document Types include: DOC, DOCX, and PDF
- Must include a caption description
- Max Upload file size: 15 Mb (per file)
- (Max 1 Document)

GIS Information: As part of the application, GIS data needs to be provided along with ISO metadata that describes the program location using either points, lines, or polygons. GIS data uploaded must be in the template format. The downloadable GIS Template to upload is located under the "Help" tab at the top of your webpage. The template is a geodatabase file that contains empty point, line, polygon feature classes. Required attributes in the GIS data tables include application title, component name, and GIS contact. For programs, please have the overall program boundary and add each project specific boundaries as they are identified. As new workplans are submitted, the GIS for that project should be added to what was previously submitted in the program's GIS file. Please be aware that your GIS file should only include geometries you have data for. If you only have a polygon, please delete the point and line feature classes from your GIS file before zipping and uploading.

For additional information on GIS files, please contact Michelle Fischer (michelle.fischer@restorethegulf.gov).

Note: Uploaded GIS data validation compares your uploaded GIS file to the GIS template and can take up

[5] Please reference the Uploads Guidance for detailed instructions on adding files to PIPER.

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to 10 minutes. If your “pre-submit” validation is failing on the uploaded GIS data file, please try to re-validate in a few minutes.

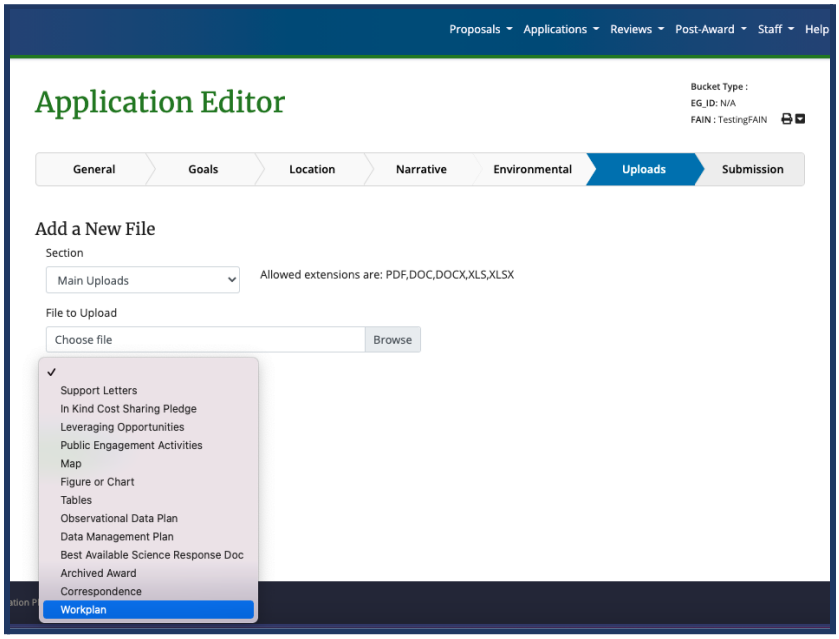
5. Click the green **Submission Review** button or continue to the Submission tab to begin the submission process.

Note: Once the program information has been submitted in PIPER additional budgeting information must also be submitted in GrantSolutions. See the Program Application Checklist for additional information.

Project-Specific Workplan Upload Guidance

The Council is in the process of developing a Workplan Module in PIPER that will allow project workplan information to be entered directly into PIPER. While the Workplan module is still in development, please provide project-specific information as a Workplan upload in the “Main Uploads” section of your PIPER program application.

A fillable Word Workplan template, and guidance on completing the template is available for download here. Please complete one workplan template for each project and upload under the “Main Uploads” section in PIPER.



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Label the workplan template file as a “Workplan” and **Save.**

Once a project workplan has been approved by Council staff, the program award will be amended to include the approved project and any additional special award conditions or supplemental terms, and the appropriate funding for that project will be released.

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Viewing Applications

Select the application tab at the top of the webpage. This will present you with two options: View Applications and Create Application. Click “View Applications” to view or edit your application(s).

1. Search: You can search your applications by title using the search box next to “Title.”

2. Filters: You can filter the applications you see by “My Applications” “Associated Applications” and “All Applications.” You can also filter by application Title (alphabetical order), Sponsor, or Status by clicking on the respective blue words. To clear filters, click the “Clear Filters” button.

3. Application Details: Clicking the grey “i” icon next to an application will lead a small window to appear, where you can view the abstract of the application, along with creator/editor information.

4. Edit: Select the pencil icon next to the application you want to edit. This will bring you to the application editor. If you need assistance with anything within the application editor, look for the corresponding section within the “Create Application” portion of this manual.

5. Print: Select the printer icon next to the application you want to print. This will create a downloadable Word document file of your application.

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Resubmitting an Application in PIPER

1) Access the application from the PIPER Application Landing Page by clicking on the "Eye" icon.

2) The following screen should appear showing different areas of the application record. At the top of the screen above where it says "General", "Goals", "Narrative" and "Submission" are toggle buttons that say "Programs", "GIS" and "Data"

3) To upload new ODP and DMP files, toggle the "Data" button which will reveal the screenshot below.

4) Now, click where it says "Uploads" and you will be taken to a screen that allows you to upload ODP and DMP files. As shown below. Select the appropriate "Tag" label (Observational Data Plan or Data Management Plan) and select "Browse." This will allow you to search for the file you would like to upload.

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Appendix A: ***Environmental Compliance Checklist***

The environmental compliance checklist below will be completed electronically in PIPER, when applicable. The checklist is not applicable to planning, education, and outreach activities that do not involve or lead directly to ground-disturbing activities that may have significant effects individually or cumulatively, and do not commit the Council or its applicants to a particular course of action affecting the environment. The checklist must be completed for all requests for funding approval that could have environmental impacts. In addition, all requests for funding approval for implementation activities that could have environmental impacts must be accompanied by up-to-date documentation of compliance with NEPA, ESA, NHPA, MSA, and FWCA, as applicable. For each law listed on this page: Indicate whether the requirement has been addressed (or if it is not applicable to your activity). In PIPER you will use the "Upload" button to add files with up-to-date documentation of compliance with NEPA, ESA, NHPA, MSA, and FWCA, as applicable. If "Yes" or "No" was selected for a law, a note is required in the text box to further explain your compliance (or lack thereof) and documentation. After uploading documentation, you may add any additional notes below each law.

Planning, Environmental Education and Outreach: *The environmental compliance checklist should not be completed for Council-Selected Restoration Component or Spill Impact Component activities that involve only planning, outreach and/or environmental education (with no approval of implementation funding). The narrative portion of the application should clearly state that no implementation funding is being sought at this time.*

** Indicates information that will be pre-populated in PIPER for an FPL application from submitted FPL proposals. This information may need to be updated at the application stage.

Activity Name (as listed in FPL or SEP):	**Is this checklist for a project within an approved program? (Yes/No/N/A)**	**For projects within programs, provide name of specific project:**
Environmental Requirement	**Has the Requirement Been Addressed? (Check "N/A" if the requirement does not apply in this case.)**	**Compliance Notes and documentation uploads (e.g., title and date of document, permit number, weblink etc.)[6]**
National Environmental Policy Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Endangered Species Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
National Historic Preservation Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Magnuson-Stevens Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Coastal Zone Management Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Coastal Barrier Resources Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Farmland Protection Policy Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Clean Water Act Section 404	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
River and Harbors Act Section 10	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Clean Water Act Section 401	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Marine Mammal Protection Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
National Marine Sanctuaries Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Migratory Bird Treaty Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Clean Air Act	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	
Other application environmental laws or regulations	___ Yes ___ No ___ N/A	

[6] Note: PIPER will allow for EC documentation uploads under each environmental requirement shown in the checklist.

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